

LOUIS J. ISOLA:

IMMIGRANT

I MADE GOOD IN THE UNITED STATES

Interviewee: Louis J. Isola

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Description

Louis J. Isola, a native of Lucca, Italy, was born in 1902. He emigrated to the United States following the First World War, arriving in Yerington, Nevada, where he had acquaintances. In the Yerington area, he—as his title for this memoir says—made good. He worked in butcher shops and slaughterhouses, and became conversant with the livestock business as few others have done. His business, the People's Packing Company, was the largest such establishment in Nevada. He has remained active in the cattle-feeding business since selling the packing company.

Louis Isola's oral history shows his deep knowledge of the meat and livestock industry of the West. Perhaps even more important, however, it shows his willingness to share that knowledge with others. Mr. Isola is responsible for instructional equipment and buildings at the University of Nevada College of Agriculture. He assisted with designing facilities and helped in numerous ways to enhance the skills of both teachers and students. Louis Isola is probably the premier livestock judge in western Nevada, perhaps in the state.

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An Oral History Conducted by Mary Ellen Glass

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber
Director, UNOHP
July 2012

INTRODUCTION

Louis J. Isola is a native of Lucca, Italy, where he was born in 1902. He immigrated to the United States following the First World War, arriving in Yerington, Nevada, where he had acquaintances. In the Yerington area, he—as his title for this memoir says—made good. He worked in butcher shops and slaughterhouses, and became conversant with the livestock business as few others have done. His business, the Peoples Packing Company, was the largest such establishment in Nevada. He has remained active in the cattle-feeding business since selling the Packing Company.

Louis Isola's oral history shows his deep knowledge of the meat and livestock industry of the West. Perhaps even more important, however, it shows his willingness to share that knowledge with others. Mr. Isola is responsible for instructional equipment and buildings at the University of Nevada College of Agriculture; his contribution there is in assistance with designing facilities and assisting in numerous ways to enhance the skills of both teachers and students. He

is probably the premier livestock judge in western Nevada, perhaps in the state.

When invited to participate in the Oral History Project, Louis Isola accepted readily. He was a cooperative and pleasant chronicler of his fascinating life history through five taping sessions, all held at his home in Reno, from October to December, 1978. Mr. Isola's review of the memoir resulted in only minor changes, mainly the adding of some names.

The Oral History Project of the University of Nevada Reno Library preserves the past and the present for future research by tape recording the recollections of people who have been important to the development of Nevada and the West. Transcripts resulting from the taping are deposited in the University Libraries at Reno and Las Vegas. Louis J. Isola has designated his oral history as open for research and has generously donated his literary rights in the volume to the University of Nevada-Reno.

Mary Ellen Glass
University of Nevada, Reno

SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

I, too, came to the United States as an immigrant in 1929 at about the age of ten; and I, therefore, have a great deal of feeling for this account of my friend Louie. I do know also that the country was different; there was the growing expectation that things would get better, and that there was much hope for the future. Louis's account of the times and circumstances shows clearly the underlying forces at work that made this country great. The idea was that there was nothing for free—you paid your own way—and more than anything else, one can say that Louis paid his own way. Yet, there is an underlying truth that keeps reappearing throughout this chronicle, that is: that good relationships with everyone was even more important than the financial success Louis achieved over his lifetime in the West in this country. He had the deep respect of his many friends and associates; he had the loyalty of his customers, suppliers, and the service industry that became such an intricate part of Louis's life.

Yes, Louis's contributions to the making of the West is one many of us can relate

to. In the future, as this account is read by scholars and other interested ones, it will be recognized as the classic and traditional post-pioneer movement of young men and women who made the West what it is, and who gave so much of themselves. Perhaps this fine example of our friend and neighbor, Louis J. Isola, will be an inspiration to young people throughout the West. The account clearly shows that opportunities are made and that success is related to hard work, clear thinking and loyalty.

Dr. Edmund Barmettler
College of Agriculture
University of Nevada, Reno
December, 1980

EARLY LIFE AND BUSINESS EXPERIENCES

Louis J. Isola: I came to the United States of America in 1920. The reason I decided to come here was, because during the first World War I was placed in jail for three days. The reason I was placed in jail was, the government put a restriction that every butcher shop was supposed to have a limited amount of meat to sell, and I was working the meat market then. And they cut us down to a very small amount in Easter week and we all went on strike. Most the people were to war—just the youngest people and the old people were working in the meat markets.

We were militarized, all of us that went on strike, and we had to go to work just like a soldier and they put me in the meat market where they were sellin' meat only to sick people. In other words, they had to have a doctor's certificate in order to buy meat. And they give us so much meat to sell and we had to derive a certain amount of money, and there was a fixed price by the government what we were supposed to sell it for. And I was so scared that I would not get enough money out of the meat. And there

was a lady came, and she had a certificate. The bookkeeper registered and put a stamp on and she was allowed, I forget, a couple of pounds of meat, short ribs. And I'd run out of short ribs, so I gave her some brisket instead, which is a cut nearby there. Well, I charged whatever the price was—the fixed price was by the government—and she went home (and she was a housekeeper for the mayor). The mayor took a look at the meat and he said, "This is no short ribs; it's brisket. Brisket's price is less than short ribs. He's charged you for short ribs." So she sent the girl back, the housekeeper back. And there was a guard at the shop all the time, checking up all the people comin' in with certificates. She made a complaint that I overcharged her, and I was indicted for that. So they had a trial, and I was only—youngest—around sixteen years old then. They had a trial; they give me a twenty-five-lira fine and three days in jail. Well, I tell you, that hurt me real bad. I served jail all right, but after I came out of that, I made my mind I was gonna come to the United States. That's how come I came to the United States.

So I came here and I worked in the butcher shop.

Mary Ellen Glass: Would you like to tell me about your life before you were working in the butcher shop, about your parents and what they did in Italy?

Well, my parents were all in the meat business to begin with. They had a slaughterhouse and they had several shops, and when I got caught by the police for overcharging, I was working in one of those meat markets.

I went to school and I went as high as the fourth grade and I flunked fourth grade. The reason I flunked was I got so scared, I was shaking. There was a professor there (called them professor over there), he gave me an examination. Fourth grade over there is equivalent to almost high school over here—the last year in high school. And I flunked and I felt hurt really bad because I was so high in the grades that I taught school all summer. I thought my schoolteacher thought so much of me that—a lot of these were—not retarded people—but kids that didn't pass. I taught school all summer.

Well, I started to work in the meat market fourteen—the fourteenth of April, 1914, and beside working in the meat market, I used to go to the slaughterhouse in the evening and I'd buy the guts, you know, cattle guts. And I used to clean 'em to make sausage casings. I worked nighttime to do that, and I saved my money. And on Sunday, I used to go out and buy sheep pelts on the ranches—small ranches. They kill lambs pretty small over there, and also goat skins. I used to buy 'em and resell 'em. When I was ready to come to the United States I had enough money saved to pay for my trip.

What did you do for fun as a young person?

When you go to school over there, you don't have—you have gymnastics one hour every day, but not football, nor baseball. And the rest of the time we had on Sunday (I had to go to church first thing—I had to go to church), but then I used to get on my bicycle and go out to try to buy pelts here and there, and try to accumulate a few cents. I was always ambitious and very conservative. In fact, I was making three cents a day at the time when I started, and I put one cent a day in the bank—I ate breakfast at home, and I ate a bowl of soup (that was two cents), and then I ate supper at home. So, I put in a savings account in the post office over there. That's the way it was. That's pretty low wages. That's when I was a beginner. After the first year I was making good money.

What about the other members of your family. Were they all as ambitious as you?

Yes, they all were in business. There's one of 'em just left—he's leaving tomorrow for Italy. He was here for three weeks. I had him here for three or four days, and then my niece took him to Disneyland, and he just got back night before last, and I talked to him today. And they're gonna have a big dinner tonight at the Sons of Italy in North Beach. I don't know how many there'll be—they'll be all people from Lucca, Italy, all from Lucca, Luchese. He came, him and his wife and his boy, the three of 'em. I always bring this particular to 'em—they're doin' very well in the meat business. I brought all my family here one by one. Yes, brothers, sisters—.

What was your first impression when you got off here?

Well, when I first got off here, I didn't have much money to begin with. I had

enough—the people who sold me the ticket, they told me how much it would cost by train from New York to Reno, and first I paid the ticket for, you know, the ship. I came on the ship *Rochambeau*, was a ship taken over by the French away from the Germans during the war. And after we landed in New York some people spotted us right away that we are Italians, and they said, “Come over with me. I’ll take you to the hotel, and tomorrow morning we’ll buy a ticket and buy some food and you go home.” So we followed him. He took us to an old hotel. And the bed bugs were terrible! We couldn’t sleep all night! Took a bath and next morning we bought some food, bread mostly, salami and cold meat and some cheese. And we had those two bottles of wine, and we had left with us—I had about a hundred and twenty-five dollars left. I don’t know what my partner had. And we ran out of food by Ogden. We didn’t have any more food, and we all went in the dining room and you know, in the dining room there’s only a place for two, so my two partners got a table by themselves, and I was all by myself. And I didn’t know what to order and a fella came to me and he said, “I speak Spanish.” But that’s all he could say, and he tried to tell me what I wanted for dinner, but I couldn’t make him understand. So I saw on the menu, “macaroni,” so I ordered macaroni. [Laughing] So I ordered that. And then I wanted to eat something else. I wanted a steak. Well, I couldn’t make him understand, so I saw somebody eating watermelon on the side of me, so I said, “Get me some watermelon.” I pointed to it. So, from Ogden to here, I had some macaroni and watermelon.

And when I arrived in Reno, I got in the station and I sat down there and I saw three or four fellows talking there among themselves. They were talkin’ Spanish, so I walked to ’em and I told ’em who I was and they said, “Well,

we’ll put you in the line so you can buy a ticket.” I told ’em I was goin’ to Yerington. I could speak a little Spanish. You know, Italian and Spanish, there’s not too much difference.

So they took me for a ride in Reno showing me all the Reno area, and when they took me back it was daylight. It was in the summer around five, six o’clock in the morning. This fellow came in there and the Spanish guy told him who I was, so these people took me to the *Toscana Hotel* right there on [Lake Street].

So I had breakfast over there and the fellow who was in there was a fellow from the same town where I was. He bought me the breakfast. He ordered me a big porterhouse steak, that big [gestures]. I ate it all, boy, I was hungry.

So then I bought myself a ticket. He brought me to the depot, bought the ticket for me. And at that time we had to go from here to Mound House and change trains. And then from Mound House, the other side of Dayton, we went to Wabuska. From Wabuska I had to buy another ticket, from Wabuska to Mason. So, a fellow named Granata, he was a newspaperman who was with me. So he bought me all those tickets, at Mound House, and at Wabuska and then he took me right to my relations. They had a store there.

I had a lot of relations here in the state of Nevada, that’s how I happened to come to the state of Nevada. I went to work in the butcher shop in Yerington for a German man—German fellow. He worked me more than normally; he worked me day and night, so I quit.

I went to work on the ranch—at the Salas ranch in East Walker. I worked there all winter and in the spring, I quit there and I went to work for Fred Fulstone and Dr. Mary Fulstone, on the ranch. I worked there all summer and the following fall, I went to work for Bill Dressler at the Plymouth ranch. Oh,

I thought it was terrible—the country was terrible. After working in the slaughterhouse for a little while and I couldn't get along with the German working me too hard, and I went to work on the ranch, I cried every night. For six months I cried every night. I'd get the blues bad. We lived in beautiful country, the climate's beautiful, and I was pretty lonesome— pretty lonesome. So then, like the rest of 'em I wanted—. I never intended to stay here. My intention was to make some money and go back and open up myself a nice business by myself. That was my intention. But after I stayed here a while I changed my mind. I thought this was a pretty good country.

It's kind of desolate compared to where you came from. It must have been a bit of a shock.

Oh yes, it was. I remember when I worked on the ranch, the Salas ranch. I worked picking potatoes. Then they were picking potatoes by hand, you know; then they didn't pick 'em by machine, they picked 'em by hand. And one Sunday, I wanted to go to a picture show. There was an Austrian fella who was working up there. He had a little Model T Ford, no top, you know, no windshield. He took me to town and we went to the show and we came back home ten o'clock in the night. I nearly died by the cold. I wasn't used to it, see? And it was late in the fall, I'd say November.

Oh boy, when I got home that night, I said, "Gee, I wonder why people want to live in a country like this." See, I was frozen, you know. I don't know how cold it was, but I don't think it could be maybe ten, fifteen above zero, something like that. And where we lived, you can pick flowers all year round. Oh, we get a little snow in the mountains, yeah. See, we're nearby the ocean. It's tempered by the ocean.

Well, if the climate wasn't very good, how about the people in Yerington?

The people all were nice, very nice. People were awful nice. Well, this boy that I palled up with him in Truckee, and we worked in the lumber camp together, I thought of him as much as my brother. He was very nice. His name was Bernard Bernaza. Oh, the people are all nice. The people all over the United States, really, they're nice, you know. It's pretty hard to beat the American people.

You moved so quickly into the kind of center of life there in Yerington with the Rotary Club and so forth. You really knew all the leading figures.

[Ruel] Lothrop and I were just like two brothers. In fact, when I got my first American citizen papers, Ruel Lothrop was the guy that taught me the Constitution of the United States, you know. And I had the examination, Clark Guild was the judge and he had all the class from the high school in the courthouse, and he remarked how nice it was for a young man coming from a foreign country, like me, to know the Constitution as well as I did. Ninety percent of the kids in school didn't know it. Yes, and Clark Guild gave me a big build up. Of course, I give credit to Ruel Lothrop. I went to school with him every night for oh, over six months. He taught me. We were very friendly.

And Jewell, she was a really nice person, his wife.

And Dolph [Dressler], Bill Dressler's brother, he was a foreman [at the Plymouth ranch]; he liked me very well. I worked there all winter. I fed five hundred yearlings. I worked pretty hard, and I left that spring. I went to work in the woods. I went to Clover Valley. I worked there in the woods at Clover Valley all summer and in the fall I—. In the

winter I lived in Truckee, and I learned how to ski and I skied for the movies all winter.

The following spring I went to work to Hobart Mills, for Sam Costa. He had a contract supplying the donkey with the wood, and another friend of mine and I, we subcontracted from him supplying wood to the donkey. We were makin' a large amount of money—quite a bit. I saved a lot of money that winter and we spent the following winter in Mexico—Juarez, Mexico. We stayed in El Paso in the nighttime and in the daytime we crossed the border.

So I left there in the spring. I came up to Truckee and I stayed there for a while. One of my sisters married one of the Maionchi brothers and she came to this country. And I went to visit her, and while I was there visiting her, the man—this German fellow that I worked with before—he asked me to go to work for him again and he offered me pretty good wages. At that time, I thought it good wages; he was paying me a hundred and seventy-five dollars a month. It was good wages at the time. I worked there—he worked me awful hard. He'd make me work in the shop in the morning and then in the afternoon I worked in the slaughterhouse, and it was hard work, one man alone. And he instructed me to make a big fire one day. I think I killed—I don't know how many animals I killed, but quite a few, and all the offal, we used to wash it and we melted it to make tallow. And he came there, he say, "You make big fire, so that tomorrow morning everything will be cooked." So, we could extract the tallow. I made a big fire and then I went home. Evidently while I was home, the grease must have boiled over, went in the fire and the slaughterhouse burned down.

So after the slaughterhouse burned down, he wanted to sell out—he wanted to get out—and he offered me to buy the place

out. I think he wanted six thousand dollars at the time for the shop, the machinery, the lot where the slaughterhouse was. I didn't have that kind of money, so I called a friend of mine in San Francisco, if he wanted to go in with me, and he came in and we agreed on the price. We were gonna take her over and one day we talked things over and we said, "Well, tomorrow morning we make all the paper, and we'll give the money."

The following morning I went over there to see him and he said, "I'm sorry, but I sold the place to another man for more money."

I was very badly hurt and so I made up my mind, I said, "Well, this fellow sure played a dirty trick on me," you know, raisin' the price. I said, "I'm gonna stay here. I'm gonna break him if it takes me ten years to do it."

I went to work for two Portuguese guys; they had another butcher shop nearby and they were no businessmen. They didn't know the meat business like I knew it. I was grown up with it. So I asked if they'd let me go in partners with them, providing I guarantee 'em so much wages a month. And they agreed to that, to let me go in partners with them providing I managed it, but I had to make a certain amount profit.

Well, I made way more than what we agreed. The town of Yerington was going full blast then. Ludwig mine was running, Mason Valley mine was running, Bluestone mine was running, the smelter at Wabuska was running. There's more people there then than there is now. We made money; while I was there we made money. We made so much that those two boys, two Portuguese guys, they couldn't stand prosperity. They began to drink. One in particular, he drink beyond—oh, he just drank too much. I couldn't tolerate that, so one of the guys that didn't drink so much and I, we bought one out.

So then we're only two partners of us and we're doin' real good. We got along fine for a

little while, and he began to do the same. He couldn't stand prosperity. He began to drink; every night he was intoxicated. He'd drink all day long while he was workin'. Well, I couldn't tolerate that, so I warned him. I said, "If you keep on drinking like this, one of us gotta get out of here, either you or I, I tell you. I can't stand that."

So I put a price on it, and he said, "Okay, I'll sell it to you."

Well, I didn't have the money to buy him out, but there was a young boy working for me. His name was Ralph Moriconi and his folks had some money. And I told him, I said, "If you put up half the money and I put up the other half, we'll buy the man out. I'll make you a partner." That's what we did.

So from there on the thing was running very nicely. I made a little money, and I was beginning to do a little wholesale business. In Tonopah, the mining was running then, Mina; there was more people there then—Thorn, Hawthorne—and I began to ship meat out. And Tonopah was doin' good. And so, little by little, I modernized the slaughterhouse. And I began to sell meat in Reno. At that time, my competitors were very bitter—they didn't want me to get started.

One of the managers in the packinghouse in Reno (I don't want to mention the name), he came to me and he said, "You don't want to do this, go into competition with us. We're too big. We'll break you. We'll give you a job at our plant; we'll give you more money than you're making now."

I said, "No, I don't want to work for somebody else; I want to work for myself."

He said, "Well, we're gonna break you."

I said, "You don't have to go very far 'cause I'm broke now, but I want to keep on staying in business. That I got and being broke's the same—I got good credit."

And so, we built a new slaughterhouse then, a new one. The old one burned down. We had a fire, and we built one and while we built this place, we built according to government specification. We had the blueprints approved by the federal government, although we didn't get the federal government permit; we didn't apply for it.

So, I was selling quite a bit of meat in Reno at the time, and they passed the Reno ordinance that they had to have city inspection. So, the city councilmen here in Reno, they drew by-laws of inspection (meat inspection). I made a copy of that and I had the city of Yerington passed the same thing, identically the same thing. So they thought they could stop me because—but it was illegal. My inspections were equivalent to their inspections. So, from then on I kept on gaining more footing here in Reno, and more and more; and I enlarged the slaughterhouse.

Some of the other people there who interested you or helped you?

Well, pretty near all the big farmers—as I grew up in the meat business and in the feed yard, I was quite an asset myself to the Mason Valley. I bought almost ninety percent of the hay grown in Mason Valley. I fed cattle—four, five, six thousand cattle there all year round. That's a lot of hay. And I distributed a lot of money there. So, not to brag about it, but really it was a big asset to the community.

It was just about the time you arrived that they realized what they had on their hands there in the way of surplus crops, and an opportunity to go into cattle feeding.

Well, I guess I got there just at the right time. And if you do the right thing with everybody, why, you acquire a lot of friends.

And they got to the point that a lot of the farmers, especially big farmers in Carson Valley, like the Dresslers, the Parks, and many others—they always consigned the cattle to me. They never sold 'em outright. They said, "Here are so many cattle, you sell 'em. Get the most money you can, and send me a check." That's the way we did business for many years.

And they realized they got more money by doing that way than by selling them outright. There was another company (I don't like to mention any names really), but one of the biggest ranches in Carson Valley and they never consigned the cattle—one of the biggest ranches. I bought 'em all outright and really, I did better by buying 'em outright for myself than on consignment.

Before we go on with that, how about getting into some more detail about the life in Yerington at the time when you were just starting.

Now, okay. Well, in the meantime, in 1930, I met Helen, my wife, and we got married. Times were pretty tough then. Money was beginning to be a little tight, and I bought a house immediately. It was a brand new house; it was just newly built. The man that built it was working in Bluestone—the Bluestone mine shut down and he had to move out and I bought the house very—.

So, we went on. The Depression came along at that time, and a lot of people couldn't pay their bills. I had this retail market all the time, you know, in the meantime. Had a slaughterhouse and retail market with it. A lot of the people couldn't pay their bills. We just told 'em to forget it until they could pay something. We did that on many occasions, especially poor people that didn't have a job. Well, it got to the point we had ninety percent of the meat business in Yerington, although there was another meat market there. And

in the meantime, all the banks in Reno went broke. We had all the money in the Nevada National Bank. And then the one in Yerington went broke. So, there was no money. So then, I didn't have any money to buy livestock so I could sell the meat.

I began to sell a little meat to the state prison. Matt Penrose was the warden then. We sold the meat for little or nothing, but that was my way to get some money. That's the [laughing] only one who had any money—was the state institutions, see. So we gained on that. We had a little money—the little money we had, some was tied up in the Mason Valley Bank, some in the Nevada Bank, and I had some personal money in the Lyon County Bank, but that money that I had in the Lyon County Bank they applied to the loan on my house.

During the Depression, I applied to the First National Bank in Reno for a loan, a ten thousand dollar loan. Hugo Quilici and Mr. [Gordon] Harris were in charge of the bank, and I told them I needed ten thousand dollars to buy some cattle to feed. And the cattle were very cheap, and I saw a chance to make money, buying cattle and lambs. I bought lambs as low as .0275 a pound, and I bought feeder steers mostly three cents a pound. And there was some drought at the same time, too. I bought two trainloads of steers in Austin one year. I forget the year exactly—I think in '36 and '37 it was—at three cents a pound. The narrow gauge took 'em to Battle Mountain, and from Battle Mountain they were put on the broad gauge and taken to Mason where the depot was, the unloading depot. I bought a large amount of cattle and lambs, and that year, I sold the very same steer for .0875 per pound, almost doubled by money three times. And I sold the lambs at .0575.

Now, I had a hard time to get the money. Here's how I got the money from the bank to

buy this cattle. Some of the cattle we bought 'em as low as twelve dollars a head, and some of 'em sixteen dollars a head, yearling steers. The way I got the money, there was two ranches that needed money to pay the taxes. Their taxes were delinquent. I went to both of 'em and I said, "If you'll give me a bill of sale of your hay, I'll give you the money for the taxes so you can keep the ranch. But I've got to have a bill of sale that the hay is fully paid. And then I'll give you the note for the balance." So they agreed to that, so I went to Gordon Harris and Hugo Quilici, and I told them that I got so much hay bought, fully paid for. I need money to buy cattle. I had some money, but I didn't have enough for what I wanted to buy.

And Gordon Harris laughed at me. He said, "We don't loan any money now. All the banks are closed!" [Laughing]

Well, I said, "Try anyway. Can't go wrong. You can't keep the bank open if you don't loan money." So he gave me the money. It took me about ten, fifteen days to get the money. He gave me a draft book, you know, write a draft of the accounts.

* * * * *

Well, we made quite a bit of money that year, and I decided to take a trip to Italy to see my mother and dad. And at the same time, there was a Rotary convention in Nice, France. That's where we went, to Nice, France. There was two thousand Rotarians that we met in Nice. There was three from Nevada; there was me, and Andy Haight, the attorney from Fallon, and Wallace that used to be partners with Kent.

My wife, Helen, and I, we spent three months in Europe. And really, the time to travel is when you're young. You enjoy more.

We went by ship, the *Rex*—two thousand passengers— beautiful ship.

* * * * *

There were a lot of Italians in Lyon County when you came, I wondered about what kinds of activities you had with them.

Well, I belonged to the lodge. The Druid Lodge was all Italians then, and I was president twice, I think, two years. And also I was president of the Rotary Club, once or twice, I think, twice. Then I had a job at the hospital. Norman Brown was chairman of the board, I was vice chairman of the board for nineteen years, and Mr. [Eddie] Questa when he was alive was authorized by the Republic of Italy to give me a Gold Star for being one of the outstanding citizens to do good in the United States. I remember Mr. Questa had a big dinner at the Holiday [Hotel, Reno] and he had all the top men from all the banks invited. And then another time the Chamber of Commerce (I think in 1962) of Lucca, Italy was giving medals to all the people who did well in this area, in this west coast, and I was one of 'em. I got a gold medal from then. We had dinner in Chicago at the Marriott Hotel; there was twelve hundred people all from one town, all from Lucca, Italy.

And there was about twelve or fourteen of us that got gold medals, and I was one of 'em. I still got the trophy here. But the University of Nevada gave me several trophies for being—I was one of the show board of the 4-H Club for many years. I still am.

If we could just kind of think about Yerington in the 1920s now, and who were some of the other Italian families there?

The Italian family that I came to was the Fabri family. There was three brothers here; they were all merchants in Yerington, with the Maionchi brothers. They used to have dry goods store, grocery store and the meat market, but the meat market, I run the meat market myself; they owned the other part. Mr. Bovard, Charlie Bovard opened the flour mill [1920]. Matt Penrose was behind it, financially.

They were working on the irrigation district, the drainage, and building the dam over there at Topaz, and so forth. Were you interested in those things?

Yes, Mr. [G. C.] Dukes, he was at the head then. There's a Dukes in charge of the water here in Reno now. His father was the man. And J. R. Wilson and Fred Fulstone, and Frank Stickney were the three men that started the water district, so pretty soon Sam Kafoury came along took Mr. Dukes's place.

Did you watch that construction, get interested in it in any way?

Yes, when they finished the darn at Topaz, they had a celebration, barbecue; I was up there that day. It was on Sunday. It was later in the fall—it was warm, I remember that, a warm day late in the fall.

What impressed you the most about that irrigation district?

I thought it was the most wonderful thing that we could do. They went in debt quite a bit, but it was the only way to do, the only way to go. The biggest trouble is that after they built that, then later on in the year, we had a depression. A lot of the bonds defaulted, not the water district, but they had a canal bond

too, the canal that took water from Mason, up that way. They defaulted.

I was wondering if you knew the agricultural extension agents that were up there then? There was Joe Wilson first, when you first came there, and Tom Buckman.

Torn Buckman—first one I knew. And Otto Schultz, Ed Recanzone, Louie Gardella, Jack Pursel. I was always interested in the 4-H Club, even before I was a member of the show board. I supported the sale. I never spent any money in my business advertising, but I figured that money spent buying all the 4-H Club calves and hogs and sheep was my best advertisement. I always set a floor on all animals. Anytime there was no sale—sale too low—I had a floor for many years.

What do you remember as particularly outstanding about these extension agents?

Well, I think we made a lot of youngsters better farmers, and better citizens, too, I think. We think that we show them what responsibility means.

One of the things that was going on in the United States and in Lyon County when you came was Prohibition. And one of the things that has impressed people a lot, especially among Italians, was that they really never understood why Prohibition had started in the first place, and there was quite a lot of prohi activity up there. I wondered if you'd like to describe that?

All the Italians made their wine, and quite a few of them made whiskey, and a few of 'em, they were bootleggers. And I know after I got married, my wife Helen and I, we made a little beer. It was terrible! It was muddy [laughs]!

But we made a little beer. I never made any whiskey, but we could buy the bootlegger whiskey for about four dollars a gallon then, but there was no taxes. I don't know how they made it, but there was several places we could buy whiskey. And there was a speakeasy in town—oh, one or two, I think. I think one of 'em was this fellow—he died here a few years ago—Benedetti, had the slot machines. He was the one had the speakeasy, bar. But, I don't know, all during the time I was young I never cared to drink much. I never drank much—a little beer occasionally, but I would never drink. I wasn't against the drinks, but I just—. I enjoy a social drink.

Did you ever see any of the prohi raids?

Yes, I saw one of 'em. Well, I was in the Silver Palace saloon, and a fella by the name of Fred Panelli and Frank Rosaschi were partners in that, and I was there, I forget what I was doin' there. I was drinkin' an orange or something, and I saw the prohis come in, two of 'em, and they run fast behind the bar. And this fellow, Frank Rosaschi saw 'em. He took the bottle and hit it right on the bar and broke it. I saw that. I don't know of any other people that got caught, but several people was makin' whiskey in Yerington. They were peddling it all over, bringing it up this way too. I don't know where.

But I saw some rock pits. They had a little shack underneath, underground, kind of a little cellar—I saw two or three of 'em. They used to ferment mash, corn meal and sugar. And how it was done finally, I don't know how it was done, but I saw it at the time.

Did you talk about it with your friends?

We thought it was a nuisance thing, we thought. That's what everybody thought, and

whoever wanted to drink, drank anyway. They didn't stop it. Everybody had whiskey in the house. We had it in the house. We didn't drink, you know; I'll say we didn't make a habit of drinkin', but socially—people come over and visit. We'd buy 'em a drink. The stuff was terrible, terrible [laughing] Italian people used to make this *grappa*, you know, made out of grape mash. You make wine first, then ferment the mash, and gee, it was a hundred and eighty proof, and it was like drinkin' coal oil. [Laughs] I couldn't drink it. I don't know, the wife and I, we drink *now*, we take a drink in the evening, I drink a little wine. At that time, although we were raised with wine on the table all the time, we never drank it when we were kids in Italy. We always had wine on the table, but we either drank milk or drank water. We'd drink water with just a little wine—just a little. It wasn't appealing to me. We had it in the house.

In fact, you know, when I first came to this country, we took some food with us. We took salami with us; we had two bottles of wine. We went through, what do you call it, the people that search you when you come into the United States? Customs office, and they never saw the wine, and we drank it on the train. We didn't even know there was a Prohibition on then. We didn't know that.

Somebody told us—they saw us with the wine, at the table drinking. There was three of us came together. They were my relations. They went to San Francisco and I got of f here at Reno.

When you were working in the meat market and you were working so hard. You said you were working day and night. Tell me what you did all day.

During the day, the first thing in the morning, I had an inventory right in front of

me, every carcass, how much they weighed, and I'd begin to do the selling. I'd start about seven o'clock in the morning. I'd call Los Angeles first. That's where we dumped all the cows. We call it "dump" because Los Angeles is an area where you sell low grade meat. We sold all the cows, and I knew how many I had in the cooler, how many I had coming, how many I was gonna kill the next day, and I described them, so many cattle, so many cows, they weighed so much, they grade so much. And that was it; and I'd sell my total production, one week's production, see? We used to do the selling on Thursday and Friday for the following week, and I knew what I had in the cooler. And I knew what I had coming in the cooler.

Then I'd call the Pureta Sausage Company in Sacramento. They took all my hogs, they took all the bulls; they took all the canners and cutters, the low grade meat to make sausage. They were the largest sausage manufacturer on the west coast at the time. They were sending sausage all over, in Reno and— it so happened that we got to be very friendly. In other words, they were good to me and I was good to them. They were an asset to me, and I was an asset to them. They had to have that kind of merchandise. And then I had a salesman in Reno, Mr. [I. T.] Nixon; he was a wonderful man. He did all the selling of meat in Reno. We had a truck in Reno three times a week, meat truck, full truckloads every—three times a week, sometimes more. We had almost eighty, ninety percent of the meat business in Reno. Now, you ask me what I did all day. When I got through doing my selling, I used to get on the horse, go in the feed yard and sort all my cattle to kill a week ahead of time. "This pen, we kill 'em Monday; this pen, we kill 'em Tuesday," and so on.

Then in the afternoon, we'd begin to load trucks—load trucks of neat to be shipped out.

And a lot of times, I'd get through early, three, four o'clock in the afternoon, and I'd go out and buy cattle. I usually'd go in Carson Valley. I used to do a lot of public relations work, too. You had to do that to maintain your business, and sometime I'd come to Reno and do the same thing. Did a lot of public relations. And in the fall of the year, I used to go to Elko County. I used to buy lots of cattle up there. In one week, sometimes I'd buy two, three thousand cattle and more. And I used to go to Montana, Butte, Montana. I bought a lot of cattle in Butte, right out of the sale; I didn't buy at the ranch. I didn't have time. Sometimes three, four, five carloads in a day.

So, that kept me in tension all the time, you know, your mind—you work ahead—a week ahead all the time. And in the cattle barn you work six months ahead of time, out-guessing the market. And I did all my buying of grain, and concentrate, and hay, oh, all during the day. I was on the telephone half the time, seven o'clock in the morning to noon.

I used to smoke consistently, you know—chain smoker—which was no good for me, and I knew it. I was a bundle of nerves, you know. Too much. I quit many times and then I started again [laughs]. After I got out of the business it was easy to quit. You didn't have the pressure that much. You just relax. So.

Would you like to tell me about some of the people that you dealt with?

Some of the people I dealt with, and it was a pleasure to deal with, and understanding, the first one was Mr. Bill Dressler and his son Fred. Particularly Fred was one of the most understanding persons I ever met. We're still very close to each other in business. In fact, this year we are in partners with some steers. We had six hundred and seventy head

together. And the Park family too, I've always been very close to Mr. Wallace Park and Brooks Park.

What made these people good cattlemen?

They have a lot of experience. They understand conditions. They understand market conditions. Fred Dressler was one of the finest cow men in the country, very, very good.

I did a lot of business with Fred Strosnider, Norman Brown, Fred Fulstone, Warren Simpson—he was a wonderful man—and oh, the Schwake brothers, Melvin, Bill. Oh, pretty near all these Carson Valley German people were very nice to me. I had a wonderful relationship with them. Gene Scossa, there; he's another Carson Valley man. He was nominated "Cowman of the Year." I did a lot of business with the Dangberg family; they were wonderful people—John, and Grace was one of the largest stockholders last few years. She's a wonderful person.

I bought some of her books. She wrote a couple of books. I've got some of her books. She's a wonderful person. [She really ran that place]. The last few years. Graham died, you know. Graham was a nice man, but he was not a manager. But Grace, she had the brains. They had a lot of good men there. Graham worked too hard. He killed himself, I think, overworking. They've got a wonderful ranch.

Some of these were better stock raisers than others?

Oh, yes, yes. The Carson Valley people, they're all good cow men. I didn't see any bad ones. A few beginners, they went over there and bought cattle ranches and they don't know how to run it. The old-timers, they're all good cow men. The Ruhenstroths, you

know, there's another family, Ruhenstroth, a very good family, then Neddenriep, a very good family, and many others—many others. I mentioned the best ones, the biggest ones. Settlemeyer, Fred Settlemeyer, he was another one. Art and Lawrence Settlemeyer, they were another bunch. Frank Settlemeyer, he was another one, good rancher, good cow man. Frank Settlemeyer for many years was at the head of the 4-H, Farm Bureau for many years, wasn't he? He was one of the leading men in Carson Valley. He's a wonderful man. Fred was a cousin of Frank. Frank, Arthur and Lawrence were brothers. And Fred was all by himself. He had another brother in Elko County; he was in the sheep business, a sheepman. I can't think of his name now. He was Senator for Douglas County for many years.

How did these people operate that made them good cow men?

Well, to begin with, they brought in the best breeding cattle; they began to breed good kind of cattle. Bill Dressler was the first one and Fred Settlemeyer was the next. But Fred Dressler himself, he was the tops, the leading cattle breeder, brought the better kind of breed—Fred was one of the outstanding—of course at the Dangberg's, they were right behind, this fellow named Neddenriep, he was foreman at the time, they were good cow men too.

And then there was another man that lived in Reno, Cecil Burkham, you probably heard of him. He was a good cow man; he had a ranch in Sweetwater country up there, and that's all Mason Valley, Cecil Burkham.

They were in the right location. The location is very adapted to cow pastures. They have a little more severe winter than other places. Not any worse than Elko county—that's bad.

The Dressler family, they used to move a lot of cattle up to meet in Smith Valley—Norman Brown ranch—that's the ranch that, I think, Charlie Lewis and Bill Dressler, and I guess, [Fred] Glass was involved I think. Bill Dressler bought them all out, I think. They called it the Plymouth ranch at the time.

Did you ever see any of these people doing experiments or upgrading things that would come to your attention because they'd be a better product?

No, they didn't do too much. I was one of the first men, and Norman Brown, the same way, to experiment on cattle feeding. Norman Brown and Bill Dressler were the first ones to put up the first mill to make concentrate. And I got the idea from them and I followed. I was second. I was making a test—they did make a test—in other words I was weighing all the feed to the cattle, and then weigh the cattle every so often to see how much they gained, how much my feed would cost, how much my gain would cost. And in fact, as many cattle as I had on feed—I had 'em all on test. Each pen was numbered, all the feed was weighed to 'em every day, and at the end of the month, I knew each lot of cattle and how much they consumed, and how much they gained and how much my cost was per pound. And of course, I didn't publicize that. I always kept that to myself. Of course, there were other people doing that, but not in the state of Nevada. It came later, it came pretty fast. But I saw that in Blythe, California where they had a lot of big feeding areas at the time. And I saw them in Tucson and Phoenix; they were ahead of us.

We experimented with different methods, with different mix of feed. Where could we get the most gain with the least cost. But since that time, when I was in it and now there

have been a lot of improvements. They're way ahead now, really.

Some of which you have brought about.

Yes, nowadays, we have something we call Rumensin. It's a mixture that keeps the cattle healthy and makes them gain way more. It's a preparation. They have to be fed very small amounts. 'Course you implant 'em, too, now, which is another hormone. But while I was feeding cattle, I put very little hormone in any of my cattle. I never implanted them with hormone. It makes better meat [if you don't] and I was goin' for quality, not for quantity, at the time.

You told me one time about how you got into the hog feeding business.

[Laughing] Oh, yeah.

Would you like to record that?

Yes. When I got married in 1930, my wife and I went to Sacramento and a friend of ours, Donald Compton, he was—oh, he had a packinghouse and I did some buying for him, and while we were in Sacramento that night a rice mill burned down and the firemen, to put the fire out, wet a lot of rice—*big* amount, volume, *big*—and the insurance company next morning put it up for sale and we bought the whole mill full, the whole thing—I think we paid five hundred dollars, a thousand dollars, something like that, and we fed—I fed thousands and thousands of hogs. I took half and this fellow Compton took half. We fed three or four thousand hogs with this spoiled rice. It wasn't *spoiled*—wet—some was moldy, but the pigs got too fat. They were gettin' too fat. Yes. [Laughs] We made a lot of money. And I think a fellow named August Menke

who was the father of these two boys—they've got Menke Brothers—they make scrap out of the car bodies? You know, they're over here on Byington Street? His father hauled the rice to us, I think, for seven or eight dollars a ton from Sacramento to here. All we did was just dump it on the ground in the big corral and turned the hogs loose. They were eating and laying down on the rice.

That was really a good deal, wasn't it?

It sure was. Well, the insurance company, they don't care, they want to get out of there. It would cost them money. In Sacramento, in the summertime, you can't feed all of it in Sacramento very well—it's too hot—they get sick. But this friend of mine, he had a lot of land nearby the river—it was a lot of water, and the pigs cool off in the water. He fed his part to them there, and I fed my part in Mason Valley. We had hogs scattered all over in different places different pens. We didn't want to put 'em all in one place on account of disease, but none of them got sick.

WARTIME BUSINESS, AND AFTERWARDS

When I came back [from the trip to Europe] I resumed—. My partner carried on the retail. We didn't do much wholesale while I was gone, because it was too much for my partner to run, but when I came back I resumed the wholesale and we got bigger and bigger and bigger until the War came on. When the War came on, we were asked by the government to "go federal." Now, what I mean is to get federal inspection by doing minor improvements in the plant, which we did, and they gave the federal inspection with the understanding [it was] to last for the duration and one year after. And well, it was hard to get help at the time. We worked like slaves, my partner and I, and it got so the government took as much as eighty percent of our total production. We sent meat out—first we supplied the nearby camps like Tonopah air base, Stead air base and Camp Roberts in California—oh, several other camps. We sent meat as far back as Corpus Christi, Texas and also in Tyler, Texas.

And we killed all species, such as, oh, cattle, lambs, and pigs and even *them*, we

had to sell them to the government—not the government directly (the hogs), but we sold the hogs to the Pureta Sausage Company in Sacramento and in turn they made sausage for the army and navy. And I got credit for my, what we called "set aside." See, a certain amount—there was very little percentage of meat that went to the public, and I distributed whatever I had left after I supplied the army and navy to mostly people in Reno and Gabbs, Nevada, because a lot of people worked in Gabbs, and Pat McCarran told me, "Be sure to supply those places." That was understood.

The only trouble was, we worked too hard. We didn't have enough help; we worked practically day and night. And there was a set price for what we could charge, and we got so [we were] selling the cattle or the carcass beef for about thirty or forty dollars less than it cost us, and then we were subsidized by the government. I was gettin' subsidy, and the only way we could get subsidy—I was gettin' a larger amount of subsidy than my competitors, because my competitors (I don't like to mention the names, who they were),

they retailed their neat, whatever they had left after they supplied the army and navy. And I had very little retail market in Yerington. I retailed some, but not as much that I would be penalized. It so happened that I was gettin' a little more—larger subsidy per carcass than my competitors. And one of my competitors, he thought it was wrong. He reported me to the OPA [Office of Price Administration] in Washington, D.C., and they had an investigation. Pat McCarran came to my rescue—him and Sam Kafoury, at the head of Kafoury and Armstrong—he showed all the figures of the percentage sold in my retail market was less than what my competitor accused me for. So the government owed me at the time over a hundred and fifty thousand dollars subsidy. They stopped my subsidy. And I told Pat McCarran I couldn't go on longer; "I can't keep on like this any longer. He went to bat for me. They had a trial in Washington, D.C., and I won out.

The next day Pat McCarran arranged so I got a check. I got fully paid.

He was a great man, wasn't he?

He was, he was the greatest! If you are right, he'll go for it. He made a special trip first with me. We went to San Francisco to the OPA there, and that's when he told me I'm gonna have a trial and we're gonna have it in Washington, D.C. [Laughs] He had plenty of attorneys with him. I didn't go there, but Sam Kafoury represented me.

How did you happen to meet the Senator?

Well, Pat McCarran—the way I got really close to him was when they were tryin' to stop my subsidy (I was supplying all the Sewell markets here, see), and I told Harvey Sewell, I said, "Harvey, I'm sorry, but I'm gonna have

to shut down; I don't have no more money to buy the beef cattle and they don't give me the subsidy and I can't sell the meat."

And he said, "Well, let's call Pat. Let's have a meeting with Pat." Harvey Sewell arranged the whole thing. He was the man with the push; he had a lot of—you know, him and Pat was pretty close.

Pat thought I was right. Harvey explained everything, how it was and Harvey—he had to close his meat market (only selling groceries), so, we couldn't keep on like this. So between Harvey Sewell and Pat McCarran and the fellow that was head of the OPA was Horlacher—his name was Horlacher—he was at the head of OPA. He was behind me. He was trying to help me. And also Verner Adams, Eva Adam's father, you remember him. He was one of the men of the OPA; they were all behind me, to see that I got my subsidy. But Pat—if it wasn't for him—I was broke. They broke me.

Did you campaign for him around Yerington after that?

Well, some, oh, yes. We were close all the time. Yes, he was a good man. I'll never forget the time when I went to San Francisco, at the OPA office, there was a fellow there by the name of McCulla. I don't know who he was; he was in charge of the OPA on the west coast. Pat McCarran over there, he said, [laughing] "I'm Senator Pat McCarran!" And boy, everybody including McCulla got up, and stand up! He said, "I wanna have a meeting this afternoon with all of you." He knew them by the first name, I didn't. And from there, see, we go to Washington, D.C. and have a trial. That's how it happened.

So, all during this time, or even a little before the war, I put up a mill to make cattle feed, concentrated feed, and I had a feed yard

at the time, too—put in a feed yard. It was the only one, the only packinghouse with a feed yard behind. I had the largest slaughtering plant at the time, gradually little by little, and the largest feed yard in the state of Nevada. It got bigger and bigger all the time. And I had a complete rendering works, which some of my competitors didn't have.

Maybe we can talk now about the outbreak of the second World War and its effect on the community and your business.

Okay, we'll begin with that. When the World War started in 1941, what was it, the seventh of December, wasn't it? At that time were doing quite a bit of business in Reno—wholesale business in Reno, Tonopah, Hawthorne—Hawthorne quite a bit on account of the Ammunition Depot, and very shortly after that (after World War started), we were asked by Dr. Taylor who was in charge of the federal meat inspection in this western states area—. He was stationed in San Francisco. And he came to us and he asked us if we would be willing to bring our plant so it would meet federal inspection and they would give us federal inspection for the duration and one year after, providing we make certain improvements to meet the inspection standards. The reason he wanted us to have meat inspection, we were always worried—the army and navy were worried of an attack by the Japs on the Pacific Coast, and they wanted a packinghouse inland away from the—near San Francisco area.

We had some blueprints made by an architect and they were sent to Washington, blueprints to enlarge the place and come to a standard that would meet federal specification. The blueprints were made by Jim Smith, architect from San Francisco. He was a specialist on drawing blueprints

[of] meat packing plants. The blueprints were sent to Washington to the Department of Agriculture and were approved and we proceeded by letting them out to contract to modernize the packinghouse according to the blueprints. And it was done very quickly and it was approved and Dr. Johnson, who at the time was chief inspector of this division, he inaugurated the plant.

And gradually, we were assigned to have a "set-aside." In other words, we could only sell so much to the public. First it started at approximately thirty percent of our total production to go to the army and navy. It got up to as high as eighty percent, something like that. There was very little meat for the public. The little meat we had, we distributed among all our old customers, and we gave them whatever percentage they were entitled to, until we got in trouble with the government later in the years. I think I already told you about one of my competitors reported me to OPA [Office of Price Administration], that I was not entitled to the subsidy. We were subsidized; we had to sell the cattle at below cost and the government made up for it. I think we were allowed approximately a cent a pound live weight. Approximately, I've forgotten exactly, and anyway, this competitor of mine by writing to the OPA, they stopped my subsidy until we had a trial and Pat McCarran came to my rescue and he saw that the trial was in order and we won out. And I got all my money back. The government hadn't paid me in three or four months. I was practically broke, then. I couldn't buy no more cattle, didn't have no more money.

So, we proceeded in supplying the army and navy. A lot of our meat went to Corpus Christi, Texas and Tyler, Texas. It used to go by railroad car (reefer car), and a lot of the meat went to Tonopah air base, Stead air base, Camp Roberts, California—many other army

camps and navy [bases]. After the war was over, we had inspection from the government for one year after the duration. We had to do more modernizing to meet government specifications. We enlarged the plant again. And we enjoyed a very good business. The plant was running full capacity all the time. Until 1953 [from the time] Korea War started, the price of the cattle and meat skyrocketed all at once. There was no ceiling then, until President Truman imposed price control, and the maximum we could sell carcass beef was \$58.20.

A lot of our meat was sold to Sacramento, to carcass boners that were boning for the army and the navy. We sold as much on one contract as a thousand steers to Gene Harbison who had the Royal Packing Company in Sacramento. And we were very fortunate at the time that the Korean War started. We had the feed yard full of cattle, just as full as could be and the price rose almost double. We were very fortunate, financially successful, but then the thing finally turned the other way [laughing]. We got caught when the market went down and we had our feed yard full of cattle, too. So, we lost quite a bit of money. So, finally, we balanced payment pretty well. We went along for quite a few years and I was gettin' pretty tired running the packinghouse. I really was gettin' tired. I tried to sell it several times until Richard Fulstone and Charlie Level were willing to buy it.

After the War was over we enlarged the packinghouse and we enlarged the feed yard, and we were doing quite a nice business in a large area. We got so we were selling meat to Los Angeles, Pasadena, Long Beach, Sacramento, San Francisco. One thing we had, we were ahead of our competitors, we had a constant, good supply of cattle by having a feed yard, and our competitors didn't have that, So it came to the point where we

didn't have to do any advertisement or be in competition with our competitors, we just sell with a small amount of profit all the time. We disregard our competitors. Sometimes our meat was two or three cents a pound higher, and still we sold, because they could depend on us having one good quality all the time, by having the feed yard.

Then during 1953 when the Korean War started, and we had the feed yard full of cattle—I forget the number, we had a large number—and President Truman put a ceiling on the meat. The cattle got way high. We doubled the money pretty near twice. We doubled it, the value of the cattle in the yard. That's when we got financially well independent. Of course, after the Korean War, then we had a drop in the market. We got caught with a lot of priced cattle on hand, we lost money, but we recovered and things kept on goin' and the place got so big. I was working too long hours and I was tired and although we were making money, good money. Labor was hard to get, good labor, although I had quite a few of 'em that worked for me for over twenty or thirty years. And I wanted to sell out. I wanted to get out. So, I had the place for sale, and Richard Fulstone, who is Doctor Mary's son, he had a feed yard in Smith Valley and there was. another boy by the name of Charlie Level— I made him a manager of the feed yard. They were two good boys, intelligent. I offered the plant to them. At that time, Richard Fulstone, he was feeding cattle for me up at Smith Valley. So I offered them the place and I told 'em what I wanted, and they said, "Give us thirty days to see if we can get the money.

I told them they didn't have to have the money, just part of it, and the rest, I would give 'em ten years to pay for it, and I would stay one year with them to see that they get going, which we agreed to that.

Sam Kafoury, Clark Guild and [Bryce] Rhodes, the two attorneys finally [had] drawn an agreement what everyone was supposed to pay a year—conditions and so forth. We made a deal. I stayed with Richard Fulstone and Charlie Level quite a while to help ‘em get goin’ and I even loaned ‘em money to buy the cattle. I don’t want the place back. I felt like I had a lump in my stomach, and I had a lot of x-rays made by Harry Gilbert, (maybe you heard of him, an x-ray man here). One day he took a lot of x-rays of me and then that afternoon I went hunting. (I used to call him Harry; we knew each other well. You know I was vice chairman of the board of the hospital. That’s how I happened to know him well—Lyon County Hospital.) So, I told Harry, I said, “Harry what’s wrong with me?”

He said, “You’re in the pre-stages of an ulcer. You’d better sell out.”

I said, “Well, I got news for you. I already sold out.” I had sold out, but we kept it secret for one year while I stayed there. I stayed with them. So, after I sold out, I thought I could retire and travel. That’s okay for a little while, but that gets tiresome, too.

So, this boy Eddie Snyder over in Yerington, he started a feed yard, and I went in partners with him—not in the feed yard, but only with the cattle. He’d charge whatever the feed cost is, plus his fee for milling and feeding, taking care of the cattle and I’m still doing that now. It makes it interesting. Retiring entirely is “for the birds”. I don’t need it.

Let’s talk just a little bit about the operation of the packing company. This was probably the biggest packinghouse in Nevada and some discussion of the details of the operation, I think, would be really helpful.

We became after 1953 gradually the largest cattle feeder in the state and also the

largest slaughter [house] in the state. And my capacity in the packinghouse was to do all the buying. I did ninety percent of the buying, buying cattle for the slaughterhouse and also for the feed yard. I did a hundred percent of the planning—slaughtering planning. I did a hundred percent of the grain buying for the feed yard, buying hay and grain. I did about fifty percent of the sales. I had a salesman in Reno by the name of I. T. Nixon (Irving Nixon), and my partner took care of all the machinery and the shipping out of the meat. He took care of all that. We got along very well, but he also got tired. We were just overloaded with work. We should have had a manager which I never could get one to suit me. I couldn’t find one that was capable. Maybe I was too cranky, I guess.

I had two nephews; I offered them, if they want to come in and eventually I’d make them a manager, but neither one of ‘em was interested. It was too hard work. Neither one wanted any part of it.

Tell me about buying a big load of cattle, what you did, how you started the deal, and how you finished it..

In the fall of the year, I used to go to Elko, Elko County. That’s where most of the cattle—it’s the largest cattle country in the state, and I used to go over there during the fair time. You meet all the farmers in town. You don’t have to go out so much, and I’d stay there a week or ten days. And I’d go from one ranch to another and I got so I acquired my clients, people that bought one year after year. At first I had a hard time to get started because Mr. [William] Moffat was pretty well established up there. And they thought he was a great man, which he *was*, but I asked a lot of farmers if they were willing to let me buy their cattle and they all— I was very well

accepted. I gradually found my clients, and I used to go up there in Elko and I called every one of them, call 'em and tell 'em I'd be there certain days and certain hours. And I used to start five o'clock in the morning sometimes, and I'd never get back 'til ten o'clock at night. My wife came with me for a while, but she got tired of that [laughs]. It was too long hours. And I used to do all the buying in a week or ten days, at the most two weeks. Then I used to back on October first and I'd start shipping them out, mostly by truck; sometime by train, but mostly by truck.

But now in this area here, in the neighborhood here, Carson Valley, Bridgeport, Topaz, Reno and Fallon and Lovelock, I did most of the buying on weekends when the plant wasn't running—on Saturday—sometimes I used to leave on Friday afternoon. But the Carson Valley people, it got so that they were consigning the cattle to me. I didn't have to buy 'em; not *all* of them, but most of them, they consigned the cattle to me.

And it turned out they really got more money than they if they would try to sell 'em outright. There's only one rancher there, one of the largest ranchers that he liked to sell 'em outright which—and I bought 'em from him; we got along fine. I had a wonderful, wonderful people that sold me. In fact, I think I got so I bought ninety percent of the cattle in Carson Valley; that is, that was available.

And once in a while, here in Reno, this fellow by the name of Angelo Rossi, he bought some cattle for me. He helped me some, and another man that did some buying for me for many years, was a very honest man. His name was Clarence Shipley, he did some buying for me.

In the Lovelock area, and sometimes in Pine Valley up in Elko County, Eureka County, I had another man up there. His name was Gus Holcher. He did some buying

for me, and in the summertime I bought a lot of cattle in California. I bought some of 'em in Oakdale. I bought 'em by myself. But I used to buy a lot of cattle from the Moraga Land and Cattle Company in Moraga. The manager's name is Bill Barnes.

Now when it'd come to buying the grain, most of the grain I bought through a broker, Taylor-Walcott in San Francisco. We'd usually buy ten carloads at a time, twenty carloads at a time, sometimes we'd buy enough grain to last a half a year. It'd run into many, many dollars. And they were very, very dependable. All the hay I bought locally. I got so I think I used about sixty or seventy percent of all the hay that was grown in our area. Yeah. Because at that time we didn't feed the cattle with the high percentage of concentrate like we do now. At that time, we fed more hay, whereas now we start them out with thirty-five percent concentrate and sixty-five percent roughage, such as hay, and then gradually we boost 'em up to eighty-five percent or more concentrate. At that time, the maximum amount of concentrate that we went was seventy-five percent.

I don't know whether I told you about the mill burning down on me. One time, it was late in the fall. We had the yard full of cattle, and the mill that mixes and grinds all the feed caught fire, burned down entirely, and while the fire was goin' on I called up Jack Williamson from Los Angeles and I told him what happened, and I told him I wanted a new mill, all steel, not lumber in it, so it won't burn again. And I told him to bring an engineer immediately and draw the plan and get the machinery going. This was around ten or eleven o'clock at night, when I was talkin' to him. In the morning at eight o'clock Jack Williamson was at the plant. We drew the plans—made a sketch like—and we ordered all the machinery by telephone. I think within

twenty-four hours all the machinery was here for the new mill. And in thirty-one days the mill was goin'.

I think it was around 1954, I think, about. And the Anaconda Mining Company were very nice to me. They gave me all the cement at cost; they had a cement plant. They were building at the same time themselves. And they supplied me with all the cement, cement mix, and they supplied two cranes to put up all the machinery at no cost to me, just all I had to pay [was] for the man, not the machines. They were very nice. Of course, I was nice to them too. When they put up the cement plant right above the slaughterhouse, they had to wash all the gravel in order to make good cement for their plant, and they were using a lot of water. And all the water was coming down toward my place, and they asked my neighbor if they would take care of that water, if they would let it go through his place. And he wanted ten thousand dollars. So, they asked me if I would let 'em go through my place with the waste water, and I said, "Yes, providing they pipe it in underground so it won't make any mud for my cattle."

And he said, "How much do you want?"

I said, "Nothing." And they were very appreciative. So that's how it happened Anaconda was nice to me. [Laughing]

You didn't have another fire after that one?

No, we didn't have any more fires. We had an explosion, but we didn't have any more fires. We had some explosion in the rendering works.

We had a flood once. I forgot what year it was—around in '53, '52, along that time. There was a big rain up in the mountains, Yosemite mountains, on the east side. And both rivers, the East Walker and the West Walker got out of their banks, and some of

our corrals were inundated. We had cattle in there, but we moved them to higher ground. We had some other corrals. So, I think we had floods twice within a couple of years; I think it was '51, the same time we had a flood here in Reno.

There are lots of chancy things in this business, aren't there?

Yes, yes. Well, the big thing was to run a packinghouse the way I run it, we had to plan what your clients want. Sometimes you had to find a buyer for the merchandise that is available to you. You know, certain amount of cattle. Like in the fall time of the year, the farmer culls a lot of their cows. And they want to sell 'em and they want a buyer and naturally, they offer them to us and we had to find a buyer which Los Angeles is the area. We had good contacts with some big jobbing house in Los Angeles, mostly Jewish people. And some of 'em are very difficult to deal with, but some of them are real good. So, we kinda learned as we went along which was the one that we could deal with, you know, and be decent.

You had to plan ten days ahead all the time. That was my job, to plan ten days ahead of time. I had to have certain good quality meat to supply my customers in the Reno area, Lake Tahoe, Sacramento, and occasionally, we sold Safeway, not always—whenever we—when business is kinda idle. They're pretty tough competitors, Safeway are. I enjoyed a lot of good business here in the Reno area. The Sewell boys that had three, four markets and were very, very good to us, bought entirely all our meat. And I supplied 'em the very best—and many others here in Reno.

The biggest job was to plan to have what your clients want at all times. If you want to be successful, you have to have it at all times.

That's where my competitors fell down. They didn't have what I had. By having the feed yard, I could have constant good quality. That's what made that plant successful at that time.

You were talking about the feed mill and making the concentrates. Did you get involved during that time in the '50s with hormones and implants and injections?

No, hormones came all right, and I didn't go for it. I didn't—our cattle—we didn't get the gain that the other feed yard had, but the meat is much nicer. The meat is drier. In other words, if you slice a platter of steaks that came from hormone implanted cattle, by that night the platter would be full of water. You know it drains out. Well, our meat didn't have that. In Los Angeles, particularly in Los Angeles, I sent two truckloads of meat to Los Angeles every week, one to Pasadena and one to Long Beach, and we specialized in selling carcasses from cattle fed without hormones. We had to charge a little more for it, but they were willing to pay for it, and the same way here in Reno. We had to get a premium for it; it cost us more to make it. They were willing to pay for it, that is, a *good* market. Then when Richard Fulstone bought me out, that's when he turned in a hundred percent hormone implant. I never did any implant while I was running the packinghouse, never did.

They got so they were implanting and feeding at the same time. Although it doesn't hurt. Some people say there's cancer in the liver. No, you would have to eat ten thousand pounds of liver [laughter], but the meat's not the same; the meat's more watery and less tasty too.

How about pesticide problems? Did you have to deal with those in the feed yard?

Yes, yes, we—the DDT came along first. We used DDT and we got rid of the flies immediately. Cattle—we could keep cattle all summer in the middle of the summer out there in the sun; there was not a fly. But then we had to discontinue it. The Agriculture Department wouldn't let us use it. But another pesticide came on the market. It was made in Germany. They called it Ruleen. We used that after we stopped with the DDT. And it was very, very—it did a good job, but once in a while the cattle'd get sick from it. We had to discontinue that too. Now we have something else, we call it Pour-on. It's something like Ruleen, but it doesn't make the cattle sick. It makes them sick some, all right, but not as bad as Ruleen. It's kind of a shot to the bloodstream. It goes into the bloodstream immediately, keep the flies out, kill the lice and kill the grubs. That's the most thing that we're after, but it has to be put on certain times of the year, oh, from September to January or February, because there're two species of grubs. There's a northern grubs and the southern grubs. The one that's raised in California, it's one kind, and in Nevada it's another kind.

All cattle we're feeding now, we have to vaccinate 'em pretty near for everything: lactose porosus, red water, red nose (which has another name for it—that's just a short name—), and shipping fever. And then we give 'em hormones too—they inject with hormones. There's two different kinds of hormones. There's Cenovex and Stilbesterol— young cattle that're implanted with some of the Stilbesterol, and cattle (big cattle that are fed only a hundred and twenty, a hundred and thirty days), most of the time we implant 'em only once with Cenovex—steer implanted with Cenovex S and the heifer with Cenovex H. And the young cattle that they implanted with Stilbesterol, sixty days

after the first implant or about seventy days, they are reimplanted again with the Cenovex. Beside all this, we feed them Rumensin which stimulates the growth also.

Did you ever have a disease epidemic or something like that in the feed yard?

We did have—the worst we had—'course in the early days we had red water. We didn't know what it was, until Dr. [Lyman] Vawter. He developed a vaccine. But red water, you don't get it in the feed yard. Red water, you get it in the grass, and sometimes the bug stays there twenty-one days. In other words, if we bought the cattle today, if they had the bug in 'em, they'd die in the feed yard, not after twenty-one days. After twenty-one days, they don't get it in the feed yard. Mostly, it's in the water, in the grass. There's no bugs in the dry feed.

The biggest epidemic we had, we didn't know what red nose was. It was a new disease that was spreading. And I had almost a thousand head of cattle from one man from Bishop, California. About two or three weeks after the cattle were in the corral, one night we lost forty-five head. We didn't know what it was, so we called a doctor here in Reno. What's his name? Dr. [John L.] Oharra, and Dr. [William F.] Fisher was there too, but Dr. Oharra was the—. The doctor came over and he told us we had red nose. Red nose is just for short; there's another big name for it. I don't know what it is. Big name. And from there on we had to vaccinate everything. We lost a lot of cattle at that time. We lost more after that. The ones that didn't die that had red nose were very poor doers for a long time. They wouldn't gain. They got set back pretty bad. They'd get a high fever, and the tongue, they can't move the tongue—almost paralyzed. The lungs get all congested. It was a mess. When we first

discovered—we had two or three vets—no one could tell us what it was until Dr. Oharra told us what it was.

So they developed a vaccine for this red nose?

Yes, yes. It was already on when our cattle began to die; the vaccine was already available. Other countries already had it. Where we got it was on the trucks, putting cattle in the trucks that already had cattle with the red nose, see. I'm trying to think of the name of that guy in Bishop that—I didn't own those cattle that died; he owned them. He put 'em in the feed yard for me to fatten them and sell 'em. And he had such a big loss; I stood all the loss—I stood all the feed for one month. I gave him all the feed for nothing. I tried to help him out. And he was a vet himself—he was a *vet*. Yes. I can't think of his name now—Clarence his first name was. It'll come to me pretty soon. [Ranny]

Well, I wondered, perhaps some of the more modern diseases, or do they just not get sick any more?

Well, the latest disease we got—we didn't know it was here; we didn't lose any cattle, but—was lactose porosus. We still lose cattle now; we're still losing cattle mostly from respiratory trouble. Sometime you vaccinate 'em—that don't mean that the vaccine takes a hundred percent. Two days ago, I lost two of 'em in one pen out of a hundred and thirty head. Both of them with the same thing; they get a high fever. Before the storm came, the days were too hot and the nights were cold. That's when they get the respiratory [trouble]. Now after the storm, I don't think we'll get so much. I put in—oh, I put in a couple of hundred calves the last two days. I received 'em and vaccinated 'em for everything. So

far—and I'm going back there tomorrow or the next day—so far, we don't have any trouble.

The way we do the feeding now, all the yearling steers, the ones that weigh around 650 to 750, we put 'em in the feed yard and bring 'em to high concentrate food as quick as we can (it takes about three weeks, sometimes a little bit more, 25 days), but all these young calves we buy, weaner calves, we place 'em on somebody else's feed yard and we pay them thirty-five cents a pound for the gain. That's the Ivey ranch. He's got three or four ranches, and he could feed five thousand calves. We plan to have about three thousand in there, my partner and I. That is, if we can buy 'em; we have quite a few bought already. It's more economical. Our plant, and my partner's plant, it takes the capacity of the plant to feed all these cattle with the high concentrate. If we had to feed more with low concentrate, we would have to put 'em too tight in the pen, which is not too good in the wintertime when it gets too wet. They do better in the other place. And that's just as cheap as we can feed 'em, in fact, even cheaper. They've got a lot of hay they can't sell, some of it a little bit weedy, and they market the hay like that. They got good corrals, and they are capable to take care of 'em. We vaccinate 'em first before we bring 'em over there for *everything*. And then we watch them. We have a man watch them. That's all he does.

It's amazing to think of all the ways the business has changed since you went in in 1928.

That's right. Different now, yes. In order to meet the competition you have to do that, keep up with the times. No other way. Very risky. Even at that, by cutting all these corners, and getting the best methods to do it, it's a pretty risky business. The cattle feed

is pretty high and there's no guarantee what we're gonna get for it. We have to sell 'em at the open market.

* * * * *

I imagine, first you want to know about outgoing—shipping out meat. The first truckers that hauled the meat out for us were Austin and May, Harold Austin and Earl May. That was in the beginning, in the first few years. And then afterwards they sold out to the Northern Transportation. And they had much better equipment, all refrigerated trucks and they had trucks so you could hang the meat on the trucks—it was all hung—which made it much better. The meat arrived in better condition. So, then they could only—Northern Transportation could haul any place in the United States—they had the right. Austin and May could haul only to Reno.

Then we developed quite a large amount of business in Sacramento and the truckline that had the right to haul in Sacramento from Yerington was C. C. Rife, Claude Rife. He had the franchise to haul in Sacramento and points, Lake Tahoe and Sacramento.

Many packers, they own trucks—they did their own trucking—and I was too busy to be involved in owning trucks and directing trucks. It was all hired; there was a set rate. I think it was around fifty cents a hundred to Reno, and sixty-five to San Francisco. San Francisco shipped by both lines; Northern Transportation had the right to haul in San Francisco, and also Claude Rife. We shipped a lot of meat to Los Angeles also, and it was all hauled by the Northern Transportation. Besides having those trucks, there was two meat dealers from Los Angeles. They were hauling one load each a week to Los Angeles. One of 'em peddled all his meat to Pasadena and adjoining points and also peddled the

meat down to Bishop along the line, and the other hauled all his meat to Long Beach. It worked out very satisfactory. I allowed them the price less the freight and we got along very nice, very satisfactory.

Now, hauling the livestock in, we had a small truck, sixteen foot long, that we did hauling just from the nearby places, nearby the packinghouse, but the long haul cattle that we received were mostly hauled by the Garibaldi Truck and Transportation from Los Angeles. They had a franchise to haul all over Nevada and California. But previous to Garibaldi, we shipped a lot of cattle by rail from Elko, particularly from Elko, Elko County—different points. We shipped from Deeth; we shipped from Wells; we shipped from Elko and Carlin, Winnemucca. And gradually the trucks came in and it was a lot more convenient by truck. We could pick the cattle right by the rancher's place and haul 'em right to our feed yard.

We never did own any large trucks of any kind, whether to haul livestock or to haul meat—never did own one. Whereas, after I sold out, Mr. Fulstone that bought me out, he bought several trucks to haul livestock and several trucks to haul meat. He changed the whole thing entirely. He invested pretty near half a million dollars on trucks, which I never could see it.

Did you ever calculate what it would have cost you to invest in trucks?

Well, I didn't want to invest that much money, and my time is more valuable to take care of my business, to see that I produce economically, bought cattle at the right price, get 'em fat at the right time. I thought if I was gonna get involved in owning a lot of trucks, it would take a lot of my time. My time was more valuable to tend to other parts of the

business. And many packers wondered how I did it, but it was done; it was satisfactory, and I never seen any truckline get rich in the trucking business; no, pretty near all of 'em went broke— not broke, but it was not a very good venture unless you were real big. From hauling the meat out, Northern Transportation sold to Ringsby and they were very satisfactory. They had a lot of equipment, very satisfactory equipment, all refrigerator trucks. And also, the Garibaldi Truckline, they finally sold out and we got connected with the Valley Livestock Transportation of Dixon, California, a very reliable people.

Well, even though you didn't own these trucks, you had a stake in good roads. Did you get involved in the promotion of the freeways, for example, over the Sierras?

Well, we got involved to this extent, that when we first opened up we didn't have a paved road to the packinghouse, and our volume of business got good enough, and we kinda got after the Highway Department and we got—pave the highway to the packinghouse, from Highway Number 3 to the packinghouse.

How did you do that?

Well, the County Commissioners saw that the volume of the business and the transit that there was to our place—all the farmers had to haul some livestock all the time, every day, either one time or another. They all had to go to the packinghouse, and really the whole county was involved. They wanted a good road to the packinghouse. It was a good place to dispose of their animals, because at that time when we were running it we were killing all species, not only cattle, but hogs and sheep and calves and all kinds of cattle, whether they were cows or steers or feeders,

we were in the market for all kinds of cattle. The plant was fixed that way. If it was feeders, we'd buy 'em as feeders and put 'em in the feed yard. If they were fat, we'd kill 'em as a fat. The outlet for our meat was—I would say there was no limit, the outlet—particularly for cows in Los Angeles, big city that consumes a lot of merchandise. All we had to do was be competitors and we were, our total production, killing charges and everything. In the beginning we were around thirteen, fourteen dollars a head where other packers were much higher. Their cost of production was much higher.

It got to the point that our plant was considered one of the most economical plants on the west coast. We gave the farmers ninety-two cents on the dollar—every dollar we took in went to the farmer, ninety-two cents. A lot of the national packers—the average national packer was around seventy-four cents that went to the farmer.

So you worked with the County Commissioners to get those roads upgraded.

Some, yes, yes. The County Commissioners got after the Highway Department and they took over—the Highway Department. And especially, the Anaconda Mining Company was beginning to come in and they had to haul sulphur from the sulphur mine in Alpine County and they had to use the same road they used to the packinghouse, so the county was looking for more people—they catered to the Anaconda pretty much. They did a nice road running north and south.

Did you think about trying to promote bigger highways or anything like that?

No, no, it was sufficient; what they built was sufficient. I think it was fifty-foot highway.

And what about the railroad?

In fact, I donated a lot of the land, my own land, too. The railroad gradually went out especially—oh, in the beginning, the Nevada Copper Belt Railroad sold out to Mr. Parr who was a big businessman from Berkeley, I think. And they sold all the rails to the Japanese government. They pulled all the rails out. And the Japanese made bullets [laughing], and they shot 'em at us afterwards [laughing]. All the rails went out to Japan for scrap metal.

Didn't you tell me one time that you had a spur?

Yes, we did, yes. Mr. Parr—there was a fellow by the name—the manager over there was a fellow by the name of Joe Faust and he was very nice. He put a spur right there at the packinghouse to unload the cattle and we shipped meat, not from the spur—we shipped the meat from Yerington depot (dressed meat) to different parts of the United States during the War on railroad cars—reefer car.

But then it became more economical even than to do it with the trucks?

Well, the railroad car, that is for hauling meat was more economical because it was shipped a long way, mostly in Texas. Most of our meat went to Texas, but the livestock gradually became more convenient by truck—it was quicker. Hardly any cattle were in the truck, or in the car over thirty-six hours. You see, there's a law that you can't hold any animal away from water and feed over six hours, and we had to sign a permit. Really, you couldn't hold 'em over twenty-four hours, but if you signed a permit with the Southern Pacific [Railroad], they could hold 'em thirty-six hours. If they couldn't

make the run in thirty-six hours, they unload `em. In fact, many cases, I bought cattle in Denver stockyards and they unloaded `em in Ogden and also in Lovelock, and sometimes straight through from Lovelock on. Cattle hauled by truck arrive in better shape— shorter time in a truck, and, well, the less time they stay on the truck the easier on the animals. On the train sometimes the long stress, long hours, especially if you gotta unload `em— anytime you gotta keep `em for twelve hours off the train— you cannot reload `em for twelve hours. And that makes the cattle too long away from their natural way of feeding.

It's really complicated.

Yeah, yeah. The cattle now—it's a little different. You can haul cattle a long way and still haul `em within thirty-six hours because they put two drivers on. Those big trucks, they've got a bed; one man sleeps and one man drives, and they change every eight hours. One man drives for eight hours and the other man—they just stop to eat, that's all. We get cattle sometimes from as far back as Wyoming. In fact I bought three hundred and fifty-one head just a few days ago from Wyoming. And they were hauled—we didn't haul `em here, they were hauled in Idaho. I made arrangements to feed them there—in one drive— one haul. But we shipped some from Elko last Sunday, a large number from the big ranch up there, Allied Cattle Company, eight hundred and fifty head, all by truck. They get home in around ten hours.

A lot of changes in fifty years.

Yes, they've got better trucks now, too. When Garibaldi used to have his trucks they were only hauling thirty-five, thirty-seven

cattle. Now we got double deck—we hold fifty-five, sixty, same amount of cattle. We hold fifty-two thousand pounds, most of `em fifty-two, fifty-three thousand pounds. Some of those trucks, they're double deck—part of it double deck, so, they move a lot of animals. They moved one shipment not long ago from Tuscarora—five hundred and eighty-eight head from one man, Mr. Venturacci, Louis Venturacci from Fallon. But the cattle were in the neighborhood of Tuscarora.

Long time ago, to move five hundred and eighty cattle you'd have to drive them to the railroad from Tuscarora, which took about two days, or three days, and from the train, that's another two days—about five days; now in ten hours, to get the job done. I shipped last Tuesday or Wednesday, two hundred—. Let's see—two hundred and thirty-seven head, and one truck alone hauled `em. We started haulin' in the morning about nine o'clock, by four o'clock it was all done. And we stopped and weighed `em, unloaded `em at the Dressler ranch, and we stopped again at another feed yard to vaccinate `em and brand `em. We loaded `em again and hauled `em up to another place—up to the Ivey ranch—one truck did all that in one day, two hundred and thirty-seven head. That's pretty speedy.

Did you ever get involved with any of the truckers and their problems about taxes?

Well, as time went on, they had to change their rate pretty often—not pretty often, but gradually, on account of cost (insurance cost). That was a major cost, insurance and tires and gasoline. And times change; it costs so much more. We used to ship the cattle from Elko County for about thirty-five cents a hundred or thirty-eight, something like that. Now it costs about a cent, and the mileage isn't so

bad providing it's highway mileage. If it's dirt mileage, then it's pretty expensive.

A lot of times we buy cattle out of Deeth up on the Mary's River, way up by some of those ranches, forty, fifty miles. That forty, fifty miles cost a lot of money.

It seemed like the truckers were down at the legislature trying to get some kind of favorable deal with their in-state taxes. Did they ever ask you to write any letters or anything like that?

Well, there's a law that if the haul's within the state, they can charge quite a bit more. For instance, I can haul cattle from, say, Winnemucca for a certain price. That's what we call "within a state," and yet I can haul cattle from Bridgeport which is about half the distance for less money, because it's out of state. I don't know why, and that's the way the local truckers (Nevada truckers), they got a pretty good bill passed at the legislature, and we don't like it. We'd rather buy the cattle over the state, but sometimes we can't do that. It got so to a point I'd stay away from Elko. I wouldn't buy any cattle in Elko. We'd buy 'em in northern California with, say, Sierra Valley, Alturas, or any part of northern California—more economical freight—Quincy, Susanville. The freight is much less because it's out of the state.

Did you try to do anything to keep them from abandoning that railroad?

No, it was too big a thing. We tried—the farmers all tried, but it was too big a thing. They couldn't show a profit. See, at that time, the mining was not running and the smelter was not running. And the Anaconda, they had a different way to do business. The Anaconda, they didn't care if the railroad went out. They didn't care. They put it on trucks. They hauled

the stuff to Wabuska. They already had made a contract with SP [Southern Pacific] and Union Pacific to haul the copper to Anaconda Mining Company in Butte—that is, the concentrate. So they were not shipping any ore like before. (Before, they were shipping the ore from Mason to Wabuska, but after Anaconda opened up, they made a concentrate. Some of the copper is ninety-six percent copper, and some of it is seventy-two percent copper.) They didn't try to stop [the abandonment], and we didn't either. It was too big. They had to show profits. That's the only way they could stop 'em, but they weren't showing any profit, because most of the people began to haul their stuff by trucks—all the wool, the potatoes, onions, the cattle was going out by truck and the railroad was—no more business. Even the hay, a long time ago, they shipped the hay by train. See, to haul it to the railroad you had too much handling, see? So, hay was one of the biggest items, hay and potatoes, big items. The truckers took over.

Yes, that's an interesting change in the West, just the change from depending on the railroad. When the railroads came everybody thought it was going to solve everything.

Oh, they thought it was a great thing, yes, yes. It was great, but time marches on, and the other way is more speedy, more economical and less handling. If you had to ship—like Fred Fulstone, he used to ship lambs to San Francisco. Well, the first thing they had to drive 'em from the ranch to Hudson, and then load 'em, and then it took a pretty near a day and a half to go to San Francisco. And the way they do now, they load 'em at the ranch and within seven or eight hours they're in San Francisco. See, it's no stress on the animals—there's a lot of loss in transit in weight.

Well, the transportation got so it was pretty nice and moved pretty fast. The modern transportation really made our packinghouse even by being so far out of the consumption center and modern transportation made it so much more attractive, more profitable. You could ship meat cheaper, see, you could ship one cow cheaper to San Francisco dressed than you can ship it live, because you only ship about half the weight, about fifty-three to sixty percent of the weight.

One truckload—or say one carload of cattle, railroad car of cattle would be about—the maximum you could load [was about] twenty-four thousand pounds. That was the maximum that you could haul, and one truck and trailer haul forty-eight, fifty thousand pounds. Double, see?

* * * * *

And we shipped, like, oh, let's say, this time of the year in the fall there's a lot of cattle, cows, especially cows—called “cows” by the farmer. And we would get 'em from Lovelock to here, or from Elko to here and slaughter 'em, and from here on we ship about half the weight. In other words, you ship them live, you ship a thousand pounds, but if you ship 'em dressed, you only ship five hundred pounds, see? And we were equipped to gain on the by-products. You know, we made meat scraps and tallow and blood meal. You know, our plant was equipped that way.

Yes, they make pharmaceutical products too, pancreatic and gall. Right after the War, I remember one time, we shipped a carload of lungs to London—they went to London, all refrigerated, frozen in boxes. It was an edible product; it was not inedible. All the inedible went to a dog food plant in Los Angeles.

Whenever we shipped inedible products, the truck had to be sealed. Nobody could

break the seal until it arrived to another plant—government inspected plant—and the inspector over there, he'll open the seal. No one else can. Because if you do, you're condemned. He'll condemn the whole truckload. Some of the by-product was used for dog food and some of it's used for fish food.

Did you sell pelts and hides?

Yes, yes, the hides—well, most of our hides went to Japan. We sell 'em to a broker and the broker sells 'em to Japan. They go there and they tan 'em over there and they've got cheaper labor, and they come back here as leather. We export a lot of our hides, especially to Russia—they use heavy leather, and we import light leather. We import light leather, you know, from the southern countries, such as Africa or even the southern states of the United States, South America, too. American people demand light shoes, light leather.

You really see a lot of things right at the beginning there.

Yeah. Yeah, a lot of those heavy hides—our hides are considered—they call 'em “Colorado” hides, because they're branded and the brand ruined the best part of the hide. In the Middle West they don't brand cattle, very few. Most of them have an ear tag on, but the West especially, or even Texas—Texas, New Mexico, oh, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Washington, Oregon and Idaho, they all branded the hides. They call them “Colorados.”

Because the majority of the cattle go through the same yard in Denver; it's a cattle center. Colorado and Omaha, livestock centers.

What about pelts?

Well, we didn't kill many sheep pelts. Mostly our pelts went to San Francisco to the wool puller. They call them wool pullers. Our lamb kill was okay in the springtime of the year, but after that we killed a very small amount, because we couldn't get consistent quality lambs at all times, whereas with cattle it's different. Whenever we couldn't get 'em we had our own feed yard. We had our own constant, one good quality beef. It's pretty hard to have constant good lambs in the state of Nevada.

The winters get too severe, you can't shear them; if you shear them they catch cold, if you don't shear 'em, they get the heavy wool. It's a detriment. They don't gain with heavy weight. They get a snowstorm, the pelts, they're wet a long time. They suffer, they don't gain. The only way to do it, do it under sheds. They do it now. They feed a lot of lambs in Fallon and Lovelock, but they're equipped different than I was at that time. They make pellets; they're pellet fed, twenty-five percent concentrate. Macdougall's doing it in Lovelock and Carl Dodge is doing it in Fallon. They've got special plants, special feed, special feeders.

There used to be so many hundreds of thousands of sheep; they drove them. But they were feeding them rather than butchering them.

Yes, yes, well, a long time ago, most of the lambs were sold in the fall time of the year here and the fat ones went to the slaughterhouse and the feeders went to the feed yards. They either went down to Oakdale and Clover, or they went to southern California, Imperial Valley, that's where they go, where the climate is dry and warm, most of them to Imperial Valley. Feed them alfalfa.

Are these pretty good businessmen who come in—the hide brokers and so forth?

Very reliable, very reliable. The brokers, they're pretty reliable people and they don't deal with anyone that's shady. Once in a while, in Los Angeles, you get a few shady—with Jewish people—you know, I don't say *all* Jewish people—but the majority of them are Jewish people in the meat business in Los Angeles, and there's a problem. But over here in the west coast, here in, say, San Francisco area, their word is a bond. And we do the same. Our word is a bond. We guarantee everything we say, we guarantee. Especially now that there's a meat grading. Any time we sell a carload of meat we always say there's so many graded *goods*, so many *commercial*—the graders determine the price. See, they're all government graded and stamped. Kind of takes the argument between the buyer and seller. Same way with the poultry now, they're all graded. If you buy Grade-A turkey, I don't care what—whether it's Foster Farm, or Meadows Farm, they're all choice turkeys providing they're graded turkeys.

A lot of them say "middle west beef" is better than "western beef." It isn't so. If it's Choice beef here or Choice beef from Omaha, Nebraska, there's no difference. You can't tell the difference. We proved it. I was a director of Western Meat Packers for many years, and we used to have a meeting, and we proved it to the housekeeper. A lot of them are very rebellious, some of these housekeepers. We had to prove it to them; they couldn't tell the difference.

You hear a lot of these ads over here like Raley here: "eastern beef," "middle western beef." It's no better than any other beef. In fact, I don't think it is as good, because there's a lot of stress in its transportation, a lot of waste—it deteriorates in transportation some, unless it's "cryovaced," and mostly it is not cryovaced. Cryovaced means airtight, sealed in cellophane bags.

You really like dickering with these buyers, don't you?

Well, not so much with the meat buyers, but with the cattle buyers. There's more dickering there. The meat buyer pretty much is determined by the big buyers—Safeway. It's Safeway on Wednesday. He'd call you up and he said, "How many carloads of beef you want to sell me for next week?" for the following week; the week to begin on Monday. And you'd give him a bid and he said, "Well, I'll supply you with a truckload of seventy animals." That's what they usually put in the truckload, seventy carcasses, Choice carcasses, running from six hundred to six [hundred] eighty. They don't buy anything under six hundred, nor over six [hundred] eighty, and to so much per pound. And all these nearby packers, they put in a bid with Safeway on Wednesday afternoon. Wednesday at five o'clock, he'll call you back, or Thursday morning early he'll call you back and he'll tell you whether you got the bid or not. And they buy according to wherever they can buy the cheapest. Now if you are one of the suppliers with Safeway and the price is equal to your competitor, they split the business. They give you some and they give some to somebody else. And the rest follow suit—Mayfair [Market], and Lucky [Market] and Warehouse Market, and what-have-you. They mostly base themselves on what Safeway pays.

So you've got to dicker with just one.

Yes, that's right. And they really—they monopolize. I never agreed to sell Safeway. I sold them as less as I could, because they monopolize—they set the price on your product. That isn't right. Safeway didn't like me too well, because I publicized that, and

I told them that at these meat conventions, cattlemen conventions, that we are at the mercy of Safeway. Most of these meat packers whenever they buy the cattle, they never want to buy 'em till Thursday because they'd want to see what the price was gonna be, dressed, by Safeway. Safeway sets the price.

So, they're big now, too big. So, well, they had a lawsuit; they lost. They had a lawsuit not long ago—two, three years ago, and for *millions*. They sued 'em for three million dollars and they lost.

What about these hide brokers? Do you like dickering with them?

No, the hide brokers are pretty competitive, you know. These Japanese have more than one company behind them, not only one. And it was very competitive. And the same way with meat scraps and the tallow. There's very competitive business.

For many years we sold to one company only. It was a Nevada company—they have quarters in San Francisco, Bissinger and Company. It used to be out there next to Flanigan Warehouse, remember that building, that big building?

They were hide buyers here in Reno. Hide and wool and tallow. But gradually they—there's so many more young fellows—brokers—they went to Japan and they developed that business over there. And the tallow—the dog food that'd get the tallow—so many—if you made good products, they bought the tallow. The tallow, they make several by-products. They make dog food, they make plastic, and they make paint, base paint. They make several by-products. I don't know how many—many, many more. And the neat scrap goes into chicken feed, turkey feed, mostly, some cattle feed. Even the tallow we feed back to the cattle—teed tallow back to the cattle—a small percentage.

Which are the hardest to deal with, the meat buyers, the meat sellers, the hide buyers, the trucking people?

The hard people to deal with for the meat packer—cattle buyer—it's the farmers that don't understand, especially one that that's not a good cattleman, they're just beginners or would-be cowmen. They're hard to deal with. They don't understand. I never had any trouble buying cattle from Fred Dressler or Mr. [D. W.] Park, or any of the people of that class. No, no trouble. The biggest trouble was the little guy, that's not a good cowman. He don't understand.

How do you teach somebody to be a good cowman?

The way you do, you explain your operation costs, and you show 'em what the market is—there's the market published every day by the Stockton yard, Department of Agriculture. And those people that don't understand are not informed—they're not in contact with that, whereas we are and the bigger ranchers are also. So that's simpler.

You've had to teach a lot of people, haven't you?

Yes, yes. It took a long time, but it got to a point, a lot of people'd just consign the cattle to us and say, "You go ahead; sell 'em' put up the charges and send me the check. The major—good farmers did that, and they got more money by doing that, so. They got more money. We protected their merchandise more than we did our own.

You talked about crossbred cattle; what kinds of breeds do you like to see in a cross?

According to my experience, our best cross do the best job in the feed yard. They

convert better and they grade better, and they yield grade better—they're Herefords crossed with an Angus. Straight Angus, not all of them, but there's some that are pretty wastey, and the Durham, they're the worst. The Hereford cattle, *some*, not all of them, some of the genetics, so they do not grade them until they get pretty big. And that applies to the Charolais cattle; they're the worst. They don't grade them until they're pretty big animals, and when they get so big they're undesirable; [chain stores] like to have a carcass between six hundred to six hundred and eighty pounds. They don't buy them over that. Not all of them, some of them. They do buy them a little bit over, but not much. That's the desirable size for the majority of the chains, you know; the meat today is sold today by the chain stores—I would say probably seventy percent or better. The rest will go to the jobbing house where they fabricate them for restaurants, and so forth.

What do you think of people who raise purebred cattle?

Raising purebred cattle is a business of its own. It takes people that have to have the know-how. Especially, they have to follow their animals from birth to four or five years old. They gotta learn which one has a high, *daily* gainability. They've got to follow up the breeding, whether it's Hereford or an Angus, or Charolais or other breeds; they have to follow 'em clear on from birth to the slaughterhouse—that is, the calves of those purebred bulls and mother cows.

Some cattle are genetic. That way they're better gainers; they perform better, conversion-wise. There's a lot of difference raising cattle; some cattle gain six-and-a-half to one, and some cattle it takes [laughing] ten pounds to one. It makes a lot of difference.

That's a genetic. The same way as grading Choice with a low yield rate, Number One and Number Two; they're genetic. So those purebred breeders, they do a lot of research. They're really doin' a good job. The American Hereford Association is doin' a good job, the American Angus Association is doin' a good job, and the Charolais people, they're doin' a good job. And the Brangus breeder—'course, Brangus really is not a breed; Brangus is a cross between Hereford and Angus, both.

They have come a long way in the last twenty years. Previous to that, there wasn't too much interest in it, you know. But *now* being that the grading is on, and the people demand Choice meat without lots of fat. They don't want fat. And yet they want Choice meat, you know. That kind of puts the purebred breeder on the alert.

A Choice meat without fat is kind of a contradiction in terms, isn't it?

Yes, but some can be Choice and not wastey, and it can be Choice and *very* wastey. That's where the point is. An animal can come to Choice grade and yet not be wastey—has the cutability of a fifty-six, fifty-eight up to sixty percent, and then the same—another Choice cattle can be Yield Grade Number Five and have the cutability only of forty-eight percent. But what I mean by cutability, I mean *edible* meat to eat. That's where the difference is.

What do you think about people who raise cattle just as a hobby?

Well, there's a few like that, people with a lot of money, and they raise these for hobbies, but they don't have the experience and are not too successful. It takes a lot of experience, and it takes a lot of time to learn to raise the

kind of cattle that the feeders demand and the consumers demand. The consumer demands good meat, tender, not too fat. They have come a long way, they really have. But that's not the end of it; they're still in infancy yet.

You said that you liked crossbreeding. How do you like beefalo?

Beefalo is something that this fellow Bud Bazzolo who's a friend of mine, and I knew when he started doing that. And I don't have enough experience. I can't say too much about that. I've seen them but I haven't followed them up. You've gotta follow them to the point where they go to the table. See how the meat tastes and how fat it is and how tender it is. People want tender meat; they don't want tough meat. I couldn't say; I don't know. I know this friend of mine, Bud Bazzolo, he started it; he spent a lot of money to develop that. Some of his animals brought as much as a hundred thousand dollars, they tell me, I don't know.

Do you like the way they look on the hoof?

Well, there's one cross they made; there's a few of 'em in Mason Valley now—the fellow raises them—he crossed 'em with Charolais cattle. They look pretty nice, but the first crossing he made—he made crossing with some other breed. They weren't very good-looking animals. Their conformation wasn't very good—with the Charolais cattle, they look pretty nice. I saw 'em. I don't know how they grade; I don't know how the conversion is and I don't know how good the meat is. I can't tell you; I haven't followed that up yet.

That's crossbreeding all the way, isn't it?

[Laughing] yes, it sure is. Well, he went back in Wyoming where they raise a lot of those

buffalo. He spent a lot of money— `course, he's wealthy. His dad left a lot of money. I knew his dad; I knew him. In fact, he worked for me as a salesman during the war. He sold some of the meat for me in San Francisco, you know. He was pretty young then, very full of life, very—he's a go-getter. He really is. He's a very interesting person.

SERVICE TO THE LYON COUNTY HEALTH CENTER

Will you discuss your activities with the Lyon County hospital?

Well, there was money available from, I don't know what they call it. They opened up a mine, the Anaconda, see, and there was a certain amount of money given to us by the government on account of the mine. I don't know what percentage— it was a large percentage, probably fifty or seventy-five percent, and I forget what they called it. Some kind of act; some Senator passed that bill. [Hill-Burton Act.] Anyway, a hundred and fifty thousand dollars from the government—it was given to us, and then we bonded ourselves for about, you know, a hundred and fifty or two hundred thousand dollars. And Norman Brown was chairman of the board and I was vice chairman of the board and there was three other members of the board. We had some difficulty with a contractor, but it was all finally ironed out. I've forgotten what we built; I think we built a nineteen-room hospital at the time, very modern in every way, though. There was an operating

room, delivery room and emergency room, and it was fully air conditioned. The place was built—it was too small. We had to build another wing. We called it the “indigent wing.” We named it “Dr. Mary Fulstone” wing.

While we were running the hospital—not *running* it, but we were directing it—there was a doctor, a young man, practicing there. We gave him license to practice there, and he got so he would operate, and when you operate for anything, you gotta send whatever you take out of the human body, you've gotta send to the laboratory, to Dr. [Vasco A.] Salvadorini. And he never did; he'd throw it in the wastebasket. We caught him—we stopped him from practicing in the hospital with the authority that came from Dr. [Kenneth F.] Maclean, [who] was at the head of the medical board (State Medical Board). And he started a lawsuit against us. I think he sued each individual board member for forty thousand dollars. I think he was suing us for approximately two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. And we went to trial; we had to hire two extra attorneys beside our

district attorney. And the judge, after hearing all the evidence, all the testimony, he threw the case out of court. And the judge that did that, he's dead now; he originally came from Battle Mountain.

[John F.] Sexton, that's right Judge Sexton. Well, we got rid of him. We got rid of this young doctor, and he moved away and every place he went, he did the same thing. He created a lot of trouble, we found out later. He was a trouble-maker.

The hospital ran very well. It was very well managed by Mrs. [Clara] Barnett. She was administrator. But we were always short of doctors. There was two doctors there at the time, Dr. Mary Fulstone and Dr. [Marvin I.] Beams and they, really, with the mine running and all the people even at the mine and in the community, we really needed another doctor, but we've never been able to get one to come over and stay there.

That's strange isn't it. Yerington's such an attractive community.

Yes, yes. Well, after nineteen years I quit running. I'd had enough of it. I put in nineteen years. I enjoyed it, [to] see the hospital built. And we had to build—enlarge it twice, and it was really one of Norman Brown's and my baby. We're kinda proud of the place. He wanted to retire at the same time I did, but they forced him into continuing—continue for another four-year term.

What got you interested in the hospital?

We were having a lot of trouble with the doctor that was there, [Stanley] Tebbe. He'd run it in his own fashion without any board members. He was a medical doctor for the hospital, he was manager, he was everything.

And he was always in trouble with everybody, and he did a lot of unethical things, very many. We caught him, and so we went to the county commissioners and we asked them to appoint a medical board. And I was appointed first by the county commissioners with four others, and we took the managership away from him. We appointed an administrator which was Mrs. Clara Barnett, who had previously been assistant administrator to Washoe Medical Center. It took quite a while to get things lined up properly, but we finally got it so. And from there on we began to think about building a new hospital. Before we became board members, there was a county commissioner there, his name was Emilio Maionchi; he tried to bond the county for only [laughs] six thousand dollars, to build the hospital and the people voted it down.

After we took over, literally, a few years later, with this money coming from the government we had to put it up for votes, you know, election. They voted for it, so, the district attorney, which at that time was Mr. Franklin Kaeller, he really was the one that did all the hard work in gettin' the bonds approved, and getting the money so we could carry on.

What were some of the other doctors like? You mentioned Dr. Mary Fulstone a number of times.

Yes, well, Dr. Beams was there. He moved in after we built the hospital. We had a quack doctor that—he was the one who was making trouble. We caught him doing a lot of unethical things. In fact, he used to bring a surgeon from out of town, from—oh, I forgot from where—Placerville. He used to come over to perform surgery, and neither one of them were surgeons. So, finally we had a meeting with the medical people from Reno.

Dr. [Donald F.] Guisto was there and a few others, and they just told them that he could not perform any more operations except in emergencies and small operations such as appendicitis, or something like that.

Dr. Mary didn't ever operate, did she? Did she assist these other doctors?

Yes, but we always had one doctor come for surgery. For a while, Dr. Guisto is one; he came sometimes once or twice a week for surgery, and then Dr. [Robert P.] Schultz came for a while. In fact, even Dr. Maclean came for a while, Maclean, Guisto and Schultz, and occasionally Dr. [Fred] Anderson used to come over. Dr. Beams, he always liked Dr. Anderson. Any time he had a patient to operate on, he'd call Dr. Anderson. But Dr. Mary preferred Guisto or Maclean or Schultz.

And the laboratory people, such as Dr. [Vasco A.] Salvadorini and Dr. [John William] Callister, they used to come over every so often checking all the operations that was performed at the hospital. I think that's who he was, Dr. Callister.

Did you ever have an election when you were opposed?

I had four elections and I was never opposed. The reason was it's a thankless job [laughing] and there's a lot of work to it. We had to meet twice a month and there's little problems always come, you know, mostly salary increase, you know, for the employees. And an attendance man for the hospital—oh, those were minor problems but there was always some problem. The biggest problem we had was with that doctor—that quacky doctor, the young doctor. He started a lawsuit against us.

Do you remember any epidemics or any real hard times when it was terribly crowded?

There was an epidemic of polio once. There's three or four in Weed Heights got the polio and some in Yerington, but it got so that pretty near all the community was vaccinated for polio.

Well, there must be a lot of satisfaction in having made a modern hospital.

Yes, yes, it was really nice. It got so, we were kinda proud over there. It's a nice building and it's very modern for a small community. It's very nice, and even all the men from Weed Heights from the mine were very, very happy to see that. There was a lot of tonsillectomies done, mostly by Dr. [John W.] Brophy. He used to come over and we'd have the tonsillectomies.

Who were some of the other people on the hospital board with you besides Mr. Brown?

[Roy] Bankofier was one of them he was living in Fernley at the time, and Jerry Houk who was vice president of the Anaconda Mining Company was another one. That's four. And there was another one.

They were all good men, they put in a lot of time. All good men! Oh yes, Claude Rife was one of us, at the time when we first began.

We made the hospital pay for itself all during the time that we were on it. We never had to have any money from the county. We were self-supporting, and yet our room rates were much less than were other places such as Reno, St. Mary's or Washoe. I don't know what else I can say about that.

After the hospital was built later on, as we enlarged it twice, we had to do some other changes such as we had to have a larger

boiler, because it required more heat for the place, and we were burning Flamo gas at the time when we started and we switched to piped-in gas from the Southwest [Gas Company], and even the refrigeration for the air-conditioning, we had to enlarge it—very expensive. And then we had to buy a very large standby machine in case the electricity goes out during an operation. We had very modern and large standby power plant. I don't know of anything else.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO

Mr. William C. Behrens told me that the University meat lab would have been an absolute disaster and completely unusable if it hadn't been for what you did for them, so I thought you would like to talk about how you got involved in that, who got you involved, what they were doing, and how you pulled them out.

Well, we'll start from the beginning. Dean [Dale W.] Bohmont called me up and wanted me to meet him at the department of Agriculture building [University of Nevada—Reno] there, and meet the architect he had hired—that is, Mr. [Edward L.] Pine had hired to draw a plan for the meat lab. I met with them and they had an architect from Los Angeles, and I think he was gonna charge eight percent of the cost of the plant for drawing the plans. The plans were already drawn, and they showed them to me and wanted my opinion, what I thought of them.

Ed Pine and Dean Bohmont and several other University people were in there at this meeting. And after I looked it over and kind of analyzed the blueprints, I told 'em that it

was a monstrosity. It was nothing that they needed. The plans were drawn to be a big plant to kill as many as fifty to a hundred cattle a day, or more. It's what they call rail system—rail system, killing floor. And the way it was drawn, they had to have so many stations and each station had to be a man working for all this slaughtering which consists of about eight or twelve men. The reason they draw a plan like that is because it's more costly and he would get more money, see? The approximate cost at that time was in the neighborhood of eight hundred thousand dollars.

So, Dale Bohmont asked me what they should do. I told him I'd like to have a meeting with him on Monday himself, without the architect. I want to kind of have a meeting on the side just for a few minutes. So we went in another room and I told him the best way to do it. "I'll go to San Francisco where the Agriculture Department (Inspection Department) is; they have several blueprints there, submitted by different packinghouse men, and I'll bring one back to fit what they need for this University." And what they need

is a small plant and a very efficient [plant]. So, they told the architect they will call him back again from Los Angeles whenever they're ready for plans. The plan that he had submitted wasn't what they needed. So, the meeting ended right there.

So, the next few days, I went to San Francisco, and I knew all those inspectors. I knew 'em all, the one in charge. That's a division, see, the Inspection Division takes in San Francisco, Nevada and all California and part of Los Angeles. They were supervisors, that's what they are, inspection supervisors. And I told 'em what I was there for, and they were very interested, very nice and that they'd like to see something like that. And they applied themselves and they showed me several plans, several plans, and finally I picked one I thought the University of Nevada should have and they agreed with me. They suggested some alteration, particularly in the drainage part of it—the area where the plant was gonna be, the drainage is not too good. They're not tied up with the city of Reno, the drainage system, and they had to meet the regulation—the Department of Agriculture regulation. So they suggested what to do in regard to the drainage, and with that, they gave me two plans to bring back to the University. There wasn't too much difference from one to the other.

So, when I got back I showed them to Dean Bohmont, and I told Mr. Pine, and they arranged to have a meeting with the architect again. In the meantime, I suggested a few little changes in these blueprints, and Mr. Pine, he's an engineer, he understands very well. And so I told them, "Let's get the man here that draws the plans and we'll tell him what we want."

So, a few days later, we had a meeting again with this architect from Los Angeles. We showed him the plan we had and we showed him the changes we wanted in these

plans. They were minor. And we told him we wanted him to draw a plant without being an overhead rail system that wouldn't take so many men. This particular plan, one man or two men could kill an average of eight cattle a day, one man alone. That's more than they needed, so, he went back to Los Angeles with the plans that we had given to him. We didn't give him the plans; we kept them ourselves, but we told him what we wanted and he came back. We had a meeting with him again and he had a very nice plan there. There were very few minor little changes I liked to have to make it more compact and more sanitary, and particularly in the meat cutting room. You know, they have a room to cut meat, teaching the University students how to cut meat, and a few other things. A few of the rails had to be changed. Anyway, he came back with a very nice plan, and they let it out on a contract, and to my knowledge I think the contract was—the lowest bid was a hundred and forty thousand dollars. And the plant is a beautiful—it's one of the finest plants, I think I've ever seen, of that size.

Yes, and after the plans were drawn, we submitted them to the Department of Agriculture, for approval, so they would meet the United States Department of Agriculture inspection, and they approved them. They were approved. And I was glad I was useful to them [Pine and Bohmont] and helped 'em, and to have nice friends like that. I'm proud of it.

How did they get so far along without consulting anyone?

That's a mistake they made. They never went to a packinghouse man to get an idea. That's a mistake Mr. Pine made at this time. But, of course, you know, he thought it was a little more simple thing. So, but he didn't

realize how—well, he was not familiar with that kind of business. Mr. Pine is a good engineer—he's a good one—*building* engineer, but he didn't have any experience with a packinghouse. And they never asked anyone, I don't think, before they hired this architect. I knew many better architects than him—architects that have been building packinghouses for many years, but I've experienced to build one. [Chuckles]

So we made mistakes too, plenty, and we corrected them afterwards.

Did you help to supervise the building after that?

No, I did not. I did not.

Who were some of the other people that were involved with the plans for what became the meat lab?

I don't remember well, I think, I think Lesperance was there at the meeting, Tony Lesperance, he was there and a fellow by the name of Ray [Ely]. (He's in Rome now. He works for the government.) Well, anyway, after the plant was built, we showed it to Ray Knisely which he was one of the Advisory Committee, Ray Knisely, Norman Brown, at the time. And we were very proud to see this plant. Lets s see, it was Ray Knisely, Norman Brown, Wilson McGowan and I. We were at the time Senior Advisory Committee over at the University, which I still am and so are Ray Knisely and Wilson McGowan.

Have you been involved in any of the teaching activities with this meat lab?

No, no.

Do you go up and have a look at it and see how it's going?

Yes, yes. Well, we had a carcass contest, and on different occasions I picked animals of different grades. I picked 'em live and I tell 'em this is one grade, this is another. And then we let the kids do the same; I'm supposed to be an expert on this judging animals. Then the kids do the same things I do and then we see how close they come to my judging, and then we kill the animal and the animal's supposed to grade according to my judgment. Well, I don't say I hit 'em every time, but most of the time I come pretty close. And the kids, they do well too. In fact, we're going to have a meeting the twelfth of this month [December, 1978]. Bill Behrens will be there, and we plan to have a carcass contest for the Future Farmers and 4-H Club, Junior 4-H Club. All those contests are done over there at the University. I'm the vice-chairman of the Board—of the Show Board, and we make the plans, how it is supposed to be done.

Bill Behrens is a very nice man, too. The University can be pretty proud of him, to have a man like him.

Well, we worked together a lot. I judged for the University for 4-H many times, you know, judged livestock—pre-show stock. I've done a lot of judging. In fact, I've done a lot of judging in different places; I judged at the Cow Palace, too, with some other—. And I judged at Fort Worth, Texas, also.

How about going through the process of how you judge an animal. Tell it to me as if I didn't know anything at all about a cow.

Well, here's how we go about judging an animal. I ran a packinghouse for around thirty-five years, and I picked animals alive out of my own feed yard, and then we

slaughtered `em. And I usually picked the kind of cattle I needed for my clients—the majority of them wanted “Choice” cattle. Very few people wanted “Good” cattle, and I had to pick `em alive and then they slaughtered them the next day, and then they graded them the next day, and I followed the grader and we learned. The mistakes that you make, you correct yourself. I’ve done it for thirty-five years, so it comes naturally, you know, if you—that’s the way you learn. Experience, long, long experience. There’s other good judges. I judged in San Francisco for the Cattle Feeders Association (California Cattle Feeders Association); there were several of us all judging, and you learn when you do that. We usually judge animals alive and we judge them as “Choice” or “Prime” or “Good,” and we’ve got the number of each animal, and then they slaughter `em, the number follows the carcass, and then we see how far off we are. I don’t say we are a hundred percent always, but most of the time we are right—pretty close. That’s how you learn.

What do you tell these students you’re doing as you start to judge?

I tell `em—you don’t tell them anything to begin with. We judge animals and then we put it down in writing, the animals, they are numbered; and we say well, Number One is such a grade, so and so, and we write it down; and Number Two is such a grade, and Number Three is such a grade. Then we tell them the rib eye and the yield grade—and the rib eye and so forth. And our judging is not shown to anyone, and the kids, the same way. After the animal is slaughtered and graded, then we see how close we are.

Well, the way they do, they cut the front quarter from the hind quarter, but they leave one rib on the hind quarter—the loin—and

then they measure the rib eye—they got a measurer—according to the weight of the animal. If the animal is six hundred pounds, it’s supposed to have a minimum of ten-and-a-half-inch rib eye, and it has to have marbling and so forth to be “Choice.”

You can look at an animal in a yard, and say, “Okay, that’s going to go Choice to Good?”

That’s right. Low Choice, or High Choice, or Medium Choice.

How do you know?

Well, I picked so many of them from my own feed yard, and then slaughtered `em and followed `em through, you can’t help but know. [Laughing] Thirty-five years is a long time.

Do you tell the students that they can find this out by feeling the shoulders, or—?

We don’t tell them. We don’t tell `em. If we tell them then they follow us. We let them judge. We tell them what it takes to make a choice animal, and we tell them how much rib eye they gotta have, how much fat, how much bark they’ve got, and so forth.

If they’ve got too much bark, then either Number Four or Number Five, see, yield grade we call it. The Choice grade is one thing, the grade of the meat. But the *yield grade* is another; that’s different. Yield grade shows the cutability, how much percentage of edible meat there is in a carcass. There’s a lot of difference from Yield Grade Number One to Yield Grade Number Four or Five.

But now you’ve been doing this so long that you don’t really know what you look for, is that right?

[Laughing] Well, we look for the conformation to begin with, the cutability and look—we can tell how long the cattle have been on feed. If it's been on feed a short time, the animal usually has a big belly and the killing percentage is very low, around fifty-eight, fifty-nine, whereas the Choice steer run sixty and a half up to sixty-two and sixty-three percent. If it's been fed too long, we can tell if he's been—it'd be patchy fat—patch over on the crotch and on the tail, and on the shoulder, brisket. And some breed is better than another. I'd prefer cross-bred cattle, see. They perform better. Some breeds, they're really bad, they're wastey—the cutability is way down and the yield grade, they go up to Number Four, lots of 'em to Number Four. And the chain stores will not buy Number Four carcasses, the large chain stores; they don't buy them. They usually wind up to the meat jobber; they fabricate them and trim all the fat and they bring quite a bit less money—the big penalty, Number Four and Five, yield grade. Usually, the Yield Grade Four and Five, the cattle have been fed too long, or the cattle (some breeds) are naturally or genetically that way.

Did you work with the University on the feed mill?

On this feed mill? Yes. Bill [Behrens] and I, we kinda give the idea. Well, Bill Behrens started it first; they do a lot of experimental work for different companies, pharmaceutical companies, and they had to have a corrals and—many corrals— and then they have to mix the feed in order to learn how cattle gain daily and how conversion is. They have to have a mix feed of some kind, and you've gotta use this Rumensin, you know, which came in lately. With Bill and I, we suggested what kind of a change, and Bill had a good man from California, who makes this kind

of equipment. I can't think of his name now. They manufacture this machinery and they're in the process of building it now. They've done some already, but they need more. They need more. I had one of the finest mills—feed mixing plant in the state of Nevada. I had one. Of course, now there's a lot better ones than I had—*bigger*, not better, but bigger. Mr. [Dick Macdougall], the Lovelock feed yard—it's really one of the finest plants now.

Did you get as deeply involved in the feed mill and the yard as you did with the meat lab?

No, no. No, because Bill and this man from Madera [California] that makes the machinery; they were the ones—. I met with them. We suggested what should be, but this man from Madera, he has a lot of experience, so he suggested—yeah— he's a good man. He drew the plans and we approved 'em; we kinda looked 'em over. It's really nice—eventually they will have—. They don't have much money to work with, you know, and the only money they make over there [comes] by doing experimental work for those companies (pharmaceutical companies). They're footing the bill. Bill Behrens is on the right track; eventually, he'll have what he wants, what he needs over there without it costing the University anything. And I think Dean Bohmont, he realized that. Dean Bohmont is in charge of all that. He pulls the ropes when it comes to spending money.

He's a pretty good man, I think. He's very sharp. He's very, very sharp.

He's very popular with the people in agriculture.

Yes, yes. I back him up a hundred percent. He understands *quick*. He's quick. If you've got something good to suggest to him, he catches on right now.

They kinda fouled up a little bit on this sale, you know, but it got corrected, you know, selling that property at the end of Mill Street. It's corrected now. They had it a little fouled up there for awhile. I think the last change they made, the last sale—the last agreement—I think I approved that. I'm in favor for it. And I'm glad they kept that part on the north side—the northeast side—where the Vet experimental station is. Then I'm supposed to be there on the twelfth. I have a meeting with the—Mr. Young, Ralph Young, who is one of the teachers at the University. I don't know what he has in mind. He wants me to be there and kinda consult or what—a meeting of some kind. I don't know what it is—they called me up.

We're going to have a meeting there at nine o'clock on the twelfth of this month, and then in the afternoon we will go through everything—that plant and the meat lab, and in the afternoon I'll have a meeting with Bill Behrens about the meat carcass show.

Do you like working with the University?

Yes, I have enough time now, and I'm glad to be able to do that. Once in a while I—you know, I buy quite a few cattle and keep quite a few cattle, and I'm not available, but whenever I'm available I'm glad to do it. I love it, to do that kind of work, because I have a little experience that I'm glad to pass around to a good cause.

I'd be interested to have you talk about scientific agriculture and scientific livestock production.

I think they're doin' a wonderful job. Yeah. And that ranch over there they got—they got good men over there runnin' it. It's Cerfoglio, Art Cerfoglio, he's the manager there. He's doin' a good job. Yes. And they got

another good man over there, Dr. Bohman, Verle Bohman. He's very good. They do experimental work all the time. They're on the right track. Yeah.

I think this University over here is small, you know; we don't have too much money to work with. I think it's wonderful—that department of agriculture. I think it's good. You know, for as much as I know, and see what they're doin', I think they're doin' a wonderful job.

Have you thought about how different the students coming out of this College of Agriculture are going to be at the beginning of their careers compared to what you were?

Really, I never had the opportunity to meet any of the graduates from College of Agriculture, but I know what they're teaching and I know the teachers; they're all good. Plenty good. And with the experience I had with livestock, cattle feeding, and slaughtering and so forth, I think they've done a good job. And Bill Behrens deserves most of the credit, really. He puts a lot of effort to that, and Tony Lesperance, he's another one; he does a lot of work.

There's a lot of other work done by the University which is out of my line, like herbicide, and bugs—killing bugs. That's out of my line, but I know they're doin' a lot of good work. And another man that's a very valuable man there, Dr. Earl Drake—he's a vet at the University. He's a top man; he's a man with a lot of experience—very, very lucky to have him. He came from Colorado. He's a Colorado graduate. He worked for Mumford as a vet. Mumford is supposed to be one of the largest cattle feeder yards in the United States. He had a lot of experience. The University should be proud to have him. He's doing a lot of research work—very, very good. I've

observed him many times, and he assisted me many times, you know. We had cattle sickness; we have it right now. We lost some cattle with a brain disease—encephalitis. And he kinda suggested what we should do. He's a lot of help to us.

There's a lot of money involved around cattle. Cattle are pretty high, and it takes a lot of money. We have quite a few in the feed yard, Snyder Feed Yard, of which I'm partner of some of the cattle. We have between six to eight thousand cattle in the feed yard, and not all of those cattle I'm interested in, but I'm interested in some of the, with Snyder. I'm a partner with Snyder. We feed some here; we've got some in Mason Valley, some in Smith Valley, some in Fallon. We've got some even in Wyoming (northern Wyoming), some in Idaho. I bought some in Wyoming and feed 'em over there. Feed a little closer. It involves a lot of money.

You're so helpful to the University, I just wondered about your thoughts—.

Yes, well, I had the opportunity to have a lot of experience. I just grew up with it, you know; I grew up with it. And very few people have the experience I have, you know. I started— well, I was born and raised in the packinghouse back in the old country. All my family was in the meat business. I guess I did the right thing at the right time. That's what they all tell me [laughing]. Yes. Well, we still make mistakes, too, even with all the experience we had, and kind of outguessed the market—sometimes we make a guess what the market is going to do, and we buy and sell according to what we think it is at the right time. That don't mean that we hit it all the time. We get caught sometimes, and we lose money too. We don't make money all the time, yes, yes. But if we can hit it more times

than— that is, if we hit it right more times than wrong, we are ahead of the game. And so far, we've been able to do that. I don't say we do it all the time. It's a very highly speculative business feeding cattle—very highly. I advise anybody that don't have any experience to stay out.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Yeah, well, to begin with, when I first went into partnership in the meat market in Yerington, the mines were running at the time—the Bluestone mine was running, Mason Valley was running, the smelter at Wabuska was running. There were a lot of people there. And there were two Portuguese boys that had a retail market. I got acquainted with them, and I told them if they let me in as a partner I could more than double their business, and it'd be more profitable. I could see that they were not businessmen. So I got in with them; they let me in and business just about doubled. And [it was] profitable, too, beside that. And we went on for a couple of years or so and they couldn't stand prosperity there. My partners, one of them in particular, began to drink heavily, and he got to the point where I couldn't tolerate him any longer, so I told him he had to get out or I'd get out. One of the two. So, he was willing to get out by paying him a fair price. They were two brothers. His brother and I, we bought him out and we went on fine, and really we were

going along good—business good—and lots of business, being that the mines were running and the smelter was running.

In them days, even the farmers, they could not have meat in the house every day; they have to almost come to town every other day. They didn't have no refrigeration, see? So, it isn't like now—now they kill a beef, put 'em in the freezer. And then they had to buy their meat pretty near every day, so the retail business [was] big. So, we went on with this—one of the two brothers—fine, for a while, and *he* got to drinking heavily. And he got so it was unbearable to live with him. So I had to tell 'em, “You'll either buy me out, or—,” I'll buy him out. So I bought him out. I didn't have enough money to pay him off, so one of the boys that was working for me—I told him if he wants to put up some of the money, I'll make him my partner. And he didn't have the money, but his mother and dad had the money. And this boy's name was Ralph Moriconi so, he became my partner. From there on, business went on very good, profitable.

That's when I met Helen. And we got married in 1930. And Helen and I—she's been a lot of help to me.

During the time I was in business, we worked long hours, very long hours. And we made money, and pretty soon the slaughterhouse burned down. It was an old-fashioned slaughterhouse, so I made up my mind I was gonna build a modern one, and the first thing I did (which I'm proud of) when we began to build a new one, we built it under government specification, so I was expecting someday to have a federal inspection. And in order to do that you've got to submit the blueprints to the Department of Agriculture, and they had to approve it, and everything we built was always approved. And all the blueprints were made by an architect that specializes in building slaughterhouses.

So, after we built it, we began to do a little wholesale; Tonopah was going good, Goldfield was going good, Mina, Hawthorne. We began to do some business with those meat retailers, and gradually got into Reno. And we had a hard time to establish trade here, but we succeeded. So, all this was from 1927 and '28 until about 1937, when I decided to put in a feed yard to teed cattle. I figured in order to be ahead of my competitors, I had to have a constant supply of good quality, and in order to do that I would have to have a feed yard of my own, so we built a teed yard, my partner and I, and we began to feed some cattle. Gradually, we learned a lot about feeding cattle. We didn't know too much, but we learned a lot.

And anyhow, it got to the point we always had a good supply of good quality meat by having this feed yard, which our competitors didn't have. And by having the good quality we constantly acquired a lot of customers, to the point, almost ninety percent of the customers—meat retailers in Reno were

buying from us. Cudahy tried awful hard to make it hard for us, but they were out of step. They just couldn't compete. They were the toughest competitors at the time.

So gradually the war came on and, in 1941—that's when the Department of Agriculture—the inspector of this division (in charge of this division), he came over and he interviewed us and he asked us if we would please "go federal." And they were going to give us the federal inspection for the duration of the war and one year after, so we agreed with them and we had to do some minor changes to comply with the government specifications. And after we went government, we were very busy, mostly what they call set-aside. It got to the point eighty percent of the set-aside meat went to the army and navy. There was a lot of restrictions, really, and we worked hard—long hours. But we accomplished.

So when the war was over, a year after—yeah, we had to do some more improvements in order to comply with the government specifications, which we did. And after we built—we enlarged the plant considerably, more than doubled the capacity. The business got so big, and we had a lot of suppliers of cattle. And all at once the mill burned down—the mill that we were feeding the cattle with, [where we] prepared all the feed. And while the fire was on—I was on the telephone—still burning; I knew the firemen were there, but it was too far gone. We couldn't stop it. While the place was burning, I called up—I got on the phone; I called up Los Angeles. I called up Jack (I can't think of his last name). Anyway, I told him I had to have a new mill. The mill burned down and I had the yard full of cattle. I couldn't feed 'em.

I told them, "Bring an engineer and come here yourself, and let's figure out—have a new mill made all out of steel so it won't burn." So eight o'clock in the morning, he was

here. He left right away; he took an engineer with him. And they drew the blueprints—a sketch really, not blueprints. Eventually they made a blueprint out of that, and I bought all the material, all the machinery then. I forgot what it cost me; it cost me pretty nearly all the money I had, too, but it was a very modern mill. And we doubled the capacity in the feed yard—more than doubled. So I was proud to have one of those mills, what they call “push-button.” It was a batch-mixing plant, they call it. You could regulate the amount of grain and the amount of roughage for each lot of cattle. We had plenty of grain bins, and so forth. And that’s when, really, the plant went to town, really. We doubled our killing capacity and we began to ship meat in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Reno, Lake Tahoe—Lake Tahoe in the summertime was one of the best accounts we had, a lot of people there.

And feeding cattle, we had ups and downs. Sometimes we got caught with a lot of cattle in hand and the market went down. At the same time, we got caught with a lot of cattle, and the market went up. And really, all in all I never had one year in the red. Never had one year, although we took big losses for a short period, but we always recuperated. And the banks were very nice to us. They were going to the limit, especially Harvey Sewell. He was one of our supporters, and he bought all the meat from us for many years Harvey and his brothers.

So, it got to the point, we had pretty good years—financially profitable or very profitable, but I got to the point I couldn’t delegate a lot of the work. I had to be there myself, specifically all the buying and all, supervise the killing, and supervise the feed yard. ‘Course eventually, I hired one young fellow—came out of Cal Poly. He helped me; I turned over the feed yard to him. But still

I had too much responsibility. My partner never took on to the responsibility of running the packinghouse. More or less, he overlooked all the machinery to see that everything was in order, and he helped with outgoing shipments, but as far as the business part, he left it all to me. But I got pretty tired and I was worn out, and I wanted to sell out. I wanted to get out. I could see I couldn’t take it. At the same time, Richard Fulstone, he put up a little feed yard up in Smith Valley, and he was doing a lot of feeding for me. In other words, I’d supply him with the cattle and he fed ‘em for me, took care of them for me, and I paid him so much for the gain. And Richard Fulstone’s a pretty smart boy, very intelligent and I offered to him if he wanted to buy the packinghouse. So, he got interested in it immediately—he and this boy that was running my feed yard. They got together, and they got a lot of money from their relations—enough money to make a down payment and I sold the packinghouse to them. And I helped them for quite a long time, see that they made a success.

Really, what I’m proud of, the accomplishments that I made, the relationship with my suppliers, the people that sold the cattle to me, they were very nice. I’m very thankful to Fred Dressler and Norman Brown, and *many* others that I did business with—really were loyal to me—and many people from Elko County also.

After I sold out I thought I could travel, do some fishing and hunting, which I did, but I got pretty bored fast. I could not continue that. I want to be in the cattle business. I want to be around with my friends, the people I bought cattle from. I enjoy that.

During this time, I was made a member of the Cowboy Hall of Fame. And Mr. Questa, who was an Italian ambassador to the United States for the Italian government, he arranged to honor me with a very nice document and

gold star for being an outstanding citizen, to make good in a foreign land. I still have it; I'll show it to you. And also, just a year or two later, the Chamber of Commerce of Lucca (that's the city where I came from), they did the same thing. They gave me a certificate honoring me for being an outstanding citizen in the United States to have a good accomplishment. They gave me a gold star also.

So, after I sold out like that, a year or two later, I began to do some cattle feeding with Eddie Snyder. He's a young man, a very capable man. He put up a feed yard and we bought cattle together and fed 'em together. He charges whatever the cost is plus his investment (interest investment). And right now, little by little, he goes on by himself in many herds of cattle, but a lot of the cattle we still are in partners. And I enjoy doing this. Sometimes it's been very profitable; sometimes it's been very drastic.

The cattle business is very risky, and I advise anybody that don't know their business, stay out of it. At the present time, things look very good, and we have lots of 'em. We have cattle all over. We have cattle—oh, we fed cattle in Carson Valley in partners with Fred Dressler and we have some at the Maurice Mack, Duane Mack. And we have some at the Ivey ranch—we've got over a thousand head there, between Snyder and I. And we have some in Idaho. We do it in Idaho also. Well, I guess that should cover—[laughing].

Well, the philosophy—what I think, the first thing, you must be honest and show the people that you deal with your honesty, and be fair in every deal that you make. Don't abuse anyone. In the long run, it pays off, and you can't run your business staying behind the desk. You have to be "right on" and supervise it, and make studies all the time. Try to have

the best *all* the time. Never be second best—my philosophy is to be *the* first, *the* best.

Now, in all those years we were in business and accomplished what we did, Kafoury and Armstrong deserve a lot of credit because they set us up in the right way. In other words, they put the books in the right way that we knew what we were doin' all the time. And Sam Kafoury was *the* man that deserved all this. Without them we could not accomplish what we did.

And another man that deserved a lot of credit was Senator Pat McCarran. If it wasn't for him we could never continue in business. During the war we had a lot of trouble with the government and he straightened things out for us. We would have gone broke if it wasn't for him. I will always be grateful to him.

I guess that's all.

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